

Common Ground

The American Experience
and European Reconstruction

—DAVID DEMPSEY

NAMES Louis Adamic

THE TOOTH-DENTIST Jean Thomas

FOREIGN-LANGUAGE RADIO AND THE WAR
Carl J. Friedrich

STATE LINE TO SKID ROW Woody Guthrie

ON THE ITALIAN AMERICANS Max Ascoli

ROCK, CHURCH, ROCK Arna Bontemps

— *and others* —

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CONTENTS

TITLE	AUTHOR	PAGE
THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE AND EUROPEAN RECONSTRUCTION	David Dempsey	3
THE HERITAGE OF THE REFUGEE	Martin Gumpert	10
THE TOOTH-DENTIST	Jean Thomas	14
NAMES	Louis Adamic	21
MANZANAR—RELOCATION CENTER	Robert L. Brown	27
THIS ISN'T JAPAN	Mary Oyama	32
STATE LINE TO SKID ROW	Woody Guthrie	35
ON THE ITALIAN AMERICANS	Max Ascoli	45
MY UNCLE POLDÉ	Frank Mlakar	50
FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION	Photographs	57
FOREIGN-LANGUAGE RADIO AND THE WAR	Carl J. Friedrich	65
THE SOUND OF HOME	George and Helen Papashvily	73
ROCK, CHURCH, ROCK!	Arna Bontemps	75
THE OPEN DOOR	John Ward Bayly	81
SINCERELY YOURS	Letters to Louis Adamic	88
PLOWING THE DEW UNDER	Grace Cable Keroher	91
HE DREAMED AMERICA	Kent Pellett	97
I, TOO, SING AMERICA	Jo Sinclair	99

DEPARTMENTS

From the Immigrant and Negro Press, 108	Organizations and Their Work, 111
News Notes, 112	
The Bookshelf, conducted by Henry C. Tracy, 115	

250 43
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To help create among the American people the unity and mutual understanding resulting from a common citizenship, a common belief in democracy and the ideals of liberty, the placing of the common good before the interests of any group, and the acceptance, in fact as well as in law, of all citizens, whatever their national or racial origins, as equal partners in American society.

To further an appreciation of what each group has contributed to America, to uphold the freedom to be different, and to encourage the growth of an American culture which will be truly representative of all the elements that make up the American people.

To overcome intolerance and discrimination because of foreign birth or descent, race or nationality.

To help the foreign-born and their children solve their special problems of adjustment, know and value their particular cultural heritage, and share fully and constructively in American life.

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THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE AND EUROPEAN RECONSTRUCTION

DAVID DEMPSEY

ANY plan for democratic reconstruction after the war depends upon a victory by the United Nations. Victory, in turn, depends upon a plan—upon our conceiving, for post-war implementation, a better world than any offered by the fascists. The war itself is reconstruction by violence. The way in which we fight, the goals we define, the patterns we create are all weapons of peace as well as war. How we win the war will determine in great measure *whether* we win the peace.

America's role in the post-war world will be pivotal. Granting this, the necessity for making concrete plans now—plans that will be vital to the very conduct of the war—is unarguable. Beginnings have been made. Yet genuine democratic reconstruction will come only if we are able to utilize fully the resources of the American people, not only as Americans but as descendants of Europe. The vast potential waiting to be released is only beginning to be realized and will never be completely tapped until the truly revolutionary nature of the war is brought home to every American—revolutionary not only in the direction of social and economic change but in the suggestions it offers for the creation of

new patterns of living as well as the restoring of values destroyed by fascism. The role of the “new American” in effecting these changes is limitless and challenging. Furthermore, his participation will raise the morale of our immigrant groups now, and so contribute to victory. The end can become the means for its own attainment.

It is America's destiny to give back to Europe the fruits of her own experience in living peacefully—including the bitter experience of 1861-65, which taught her that a house divided cannot stand.

It is the American experience—insofar as it has proved the compatibility of our hybrid population and the workability of our democracy—that must be made part of post-war Europe. This is not a presumption, but our obligation as a leading belligerent. If we do not believe in democracy for Europe we do not believe in it for America, for Europe and America are rapidly losing the cultural distinctions that made them different, the economic freedom that made them independent, and the spatial distance that set them apart. “Global” peace and “global” government are the logical results of global war.

The prospect for reconstruction along

these lines is challenging. It presupposes that democracy, at least for the Western world, is indivisible. It assumes that democracy, if it is to defeat fascism, must be militant—militarily, as long as the war lasts; psychologically when peace comes. Plans for reconstruction now can thus serve a double function: they can lay the groundwork for the kind of post-war world we want and in so doing they can furnish war aims that will enlist the vast democratic potential at home, much of which is not yet sure whether we are merely avenging Pearl Harbor or really fighting Mr. Wallace's "people's revolution." In short, the moral effect of planning now for a democratic world order would be to give the war a soul.

II

Democracy failed in post-Versailles Europe partly because the moral foundations for its survival were lacking. The superimposition of democratic forms was not enough to call forth democratic substance: people found themselves suddenly presented with the mechanics of democracy without knowing how to live it. Democracy is at bottom an attitude and a way of life. These qualities had disappeared in Europe before even the republican "form" was scuttled. Hitler did not kill democracy: he merely administered the coup de grace.

The first consideration, then, of America's role in reconstruction is the "exporting"—along with the food, money, materials, and men that will be needed in post-war Europe—of basic patterns of the American experience: belief in the equality of all men, the principle of equal opportunity, universal education, genuine representative government, a scorn of social privilege. These are patterns of democratic living that have resulted no less from our unique geographical and historical position than from the multi-national

character of our population—the immigration of millions who sought these shores because they wanted democracy. Merely to restore the forms of political democracy is to build a house of cards. Reconstruction implies thoroughgoing re-vamping of existing social—not merely political—relationships.

The federation of Europe may be the political solution but without the federation of the people of Europe, as distinct from their governments, and the democratization of their social institutions, we cannot expect lasting democracy. An inhabitant of Europe must not be a citizen of his country only, but a citizen of Europe, much in the same way that a Texan is automatically a citizen of the United States. Some people will raise the objection that Europe is not a homogeneous people. It is multi-national, multi-lingual, multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious.

But so is America. And, for that matter, so is Switzerland, the soundest democracy on the Continent. It would seem that a variety and mixture of peoples, rather than their separation and "nationalization," invite democracy on the functional level of living and working. American democracy, its own cleavages notwithstanding, is partly the result of the complementary, give-and-take nature of her peoples; of the techniques for living together on the basis of social equality that men of different color and tongue have developed by the very fact of their difference.

Is it not logical then that those who have grown up, either as immigrants or descendants of immigrants, should have most to offer Europe as regards this aspect of the American experience? Will not "democracy in action" on this side of the Atlantic be better transplanted by those who are able to judge the probable factors of resistance and acceptance in

THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE AND EUROPEAN RECONSTRUCTION

Europe because these qualities have already warred in their own backgrounds? Not only can we allay the possible suspicions of Europe as to the integrity of our purpose by sending back the product of our immigration but we can weld the newer elements of our cosmopolitan population into the common effort. Such a plan would herald the fact that members of these newer groups have a contribution to make to the national cause for which they alone are qualified. Use of a foreign language and residual attunement with an old-country culture—things which have generally tended to make for an “inferiority complex” among the newer Americans—would become instead the very keys to opportunity and distinction. American as well as European democracy would gain.

III

No one has stated the case for using the best products of immigration in European reconstruction so challengingly as Louis Adamic, in his *Two-Way Passage*. When Mr. Adamic’s “passage back” proposal first appeared in October 1941, it was considered by many as fantastic. But we were not in the war, and the obligations we have since assumed were not recognized. Today, the necessity of American leadership in post-war reconstruction is admitted by all. Government leaders, from the President on down, have considered Mr. Adamic’s plan seriously, and have come to realize both the strategic value and the resources of the foreign-born and their descendants in any world reconstruction.

The young men and women of these groups have the two-fold advantage of being thoroughly “Americanized” and at the same time of being inheritors of a particular national or racial culture. Frequently they command the language of their national background; many know

the history and social development of their father’s country; more often they possess an insight into that most impalpable thing of all—temperament. Finally, they are among the most sincere believers in democracy. Witness, for example, the Finns in the United States, who for the most part, very close to their mother country spiritually and yet thoroughgoing believers in democracy as Americans, are torn between their old love and the new degradation under Mannerheim. It is an humiliation that will not be lifted until Finland is rescued from her own traitors. Who understands this better than the Finnish Americans? Who are better able to reawaken in Finland the ideals which once made her the most respected European nation in the eyes of Americans? Qualities such as these, as well as technical training, will determine the success or failure of our part in the administration of European reconstruction.

Such planning should be begun now, as an official part of American war strategy. Popular demand for a constructive peace is evident on every hand; the people, at least, feel that this war must be justified. But without central planning and a definition of goals by those who are directly in charge of American policy, popular agitation will run into frustration, and the cynicism that followed World War I will be repeated. There is, however, evidence to show that both our government and many private institutions are aware of the need to train leadership for the progressive rebuilding of Europe. The State Department has, under Sumner Welles, begun a survey of the prospects of a peace embodying the Four Freedoms. The Department’s Division of Cultural Relations is concerning itself with the contributions that new-immigrant groups can make in developing a world point of view among the American people as a

COMMON GROUND

whole. The Army, under General Frederick Osborne, is incorporating a world-democratic outlook in its educational program. The government only recently announced a plan to provide loan scholarships to 10,000 students now studying subjects especially applicable to the war effort. Under the plan students agree to accept, upon graduation, service in any capacity to which the War Manpower Commission assigns them. Such a project is pregnant with possibilities for coordinating the "war-usefulness" with the "peace-usefulness" of American youth. Perhaps its only present limitation is the relatively small number of scholarships provided and the apparent absence of any recognition that an ideological attitude too is vital to the war and the peace.

The extent to which private institutions, particularly the colleges, have begun to train for post-war problems is another index of popular feeling on the subject. Antioch College has started an Institute for Democratic Reconstruction; the curriculum stresses background and understanding of the causes of the present world chaos, of the broad principles of reconstruction along progressive democratic lines, as well as training in democratic theory and technique. Each student is trained in the history, language, literature, and basic problems of a particular area of the world, with a view to active participation in the rebuilding of that area. This study program, extending over three years, will be combined with appropriate work experience in refugee camps, social service agencies, and government bureaus.

Training along these lines is also being offered at other institutions, at Oberlin, Princeton, and the Universities of Michigan and Minnesota. At Stanford University "passage back" scholarships are being offered to students who want to participate in reconstruction abroad. At Smith

College a special seminar has been set up by Dr. Walter Kotschnig and American-born daughters of Polish farmers in New England are being trained with particular view to their working in Poland during the post-war transition period there. Columbia University has inaugurated a Training in International Administration to prepare students for administrative tasks in reconstruction. As at Antioch, each trainee is required to specialize in a restricted geographic area and its institutions and culture, to which he will devote the major portion of his attention. Problems of Military Administration, Economic Rehabilitation and Relief will be covered. Students will be trained for jobs ranging from those of officers charged with maintaining security and administering temporarily the governments of the areas occupied, to those of economic experts assisting in the rehabilitation and management of local economic institutions, or of social workers who administer relief.

Perhaps these pioneering instances are only ignition points. The main charge is yet to come. To date, few have been conceived with possible nationality contributions in mind. Scholarships similar to those referred to above should be set up for the specific purpose of training administrators for particular areas and functions. Individuals would be selected by suitable means from the various nationality groups and to some extent from old-stock Americans too. The orientation of their training would be around:

- a. Acquiring specific scientific skills and techniques useful in reconstruction work. Courses in Foods and Nutrition, Preventive Medicine, Agronomy, Animal Husbandry, as well as engineering and social work, would constitute this part of the curriculum.

THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE AND EUROPEAN RECONSTRUCTION

- b. A mastery of the language, history, literature, and social background of a particular country or area as well as a knowledge of the recent political history and the conflicting elements involved within this history.
- c. Familiarity with American history, the essentials of democracy, and educational techniques for giving back to the people of Europe the values of the American experience.

IV

Areas in which reconstruction will be carried on during the transition period following the war will probably fall under the following (approximate) headings: relief, administration of governmental affairs, technical assistance, public education, and aid in rebuilding damaged cities, industries, and farmlands.

The democratic pattern can be carried back to Europe through each of these channels—provided, of course, that we train our administrators in the techniques of promoting democracy as well as in specific occupational skills. Education and government, it is apparent, offer better opportunities than do the areas of relief and technical assistance. The possibilities inherent in occupational reconstruction, however, should not be overlooked. The extension of co-operatives to those parts of Europe where they have never been developed, for example, is a practical means of “giving back” a democratic institution, originally European, in a form most likely to survive because it is functional, not merely political. Is it an accident that the most progressive nations in Europe before the war were those in which co-operatives had been most highly developed? Along with the trade unions, they were the first institutions liquidated by Hitler in his occupation of Norway and Denmark.

In education and government recon-

struction the opportunities will be even greater, for here the impregnation of the democratic idea can be more directly a function of those in charge. In these areas particularly must we take account of differences in national character. In any successful transplantation, the character of the soil must be considered. We cannot Americanize Europe; we can simply Europeanize universally desirable ways of living that have been most successfully developed in America—freedom of opportunity, social equality among men, freedom of worship, speech, and press. This is all the more reason why those whose ties are still close to Europe must have leading parts in the job. They will seek out what is congenial in the quality of their nation rather than bring plans which require a set of qualities which do not exist there. As Dr. Kotschnig of Smith College suggests, we may have to recognize the disciplinarian nature of the German people and work for democracy in Germany through Hitler-established organizations—the youth movement, for instance—which express the German desire for order and system. Indeed there are many local institutions which are capable of being adapted to democratic ends. Even though they may temporarily have been run for fascist purposes, they should be utilized for their allegiance value wherever they can contribute to the evolving of a democratic pattern of social and political relationships.

Although in any such “passage back” project America alone will not be in a position to dictate the terms of reconstruction, it is generally admitted she will be expected to undertake most of the actual work. The re-education of the Axis nations and their satellites presents problems far more difficult than those of the conquered Allies. Not only may Germany, Hungary, Austria, and Italy have to be

COMMON GROUND

governed for many years by provisional, Allied-staffed governments, but their educational systems may have to be supervised entirely by American educators sent abroad for the purpose. Discussion and debate must be substituted for indoctrination. In the conquered countries particularly the educational leaders are being systematically liquidated. American teachers may have literally to rebuild the educational systems of these nations and staff them until native teachers can be trained to take their places. Thousands of American teachers, trained for the purpose, should be given the opportunity to go abroad to take part in this work. European young men and women, desirous of co-operating with the reconstruction authorities, should be sent to America as "exchange scholars" to take up the permanent role of education for democracy when the occupation is ended.

We must not forget, in planning for a democratic Europe, the various underground movements in Germany and the conquered countries. They have already enlisted the more fearless democratic elements, and their influence and following, as well as their stake in a new Europe, must command the attention of those who are now fighting Hitler at a safer distance. It is not unlikely that we may find ourselves, if we are to insist on a truly progressive policy after the war, lined up with these elements against the possibly conservative—and contradictory—plans of the various governments-in-exile. If this happens, it is all the more reason why a good share of our leaders should be drawn from nationality segments of our population who are prepared to insist, by virtue of their own history as immigrant groups, on real freedom for their countries of origin.

There is another advantage to entrusting many of these tasks to Americans of

recent Old-World descent. To a great extent reconstruction will have to be carried out through existing international organizations working under the supervision of an Inter-Allied Reconstruction Authority. Many such organizations suggest themselves: the International Labour Organization, the Council for Education in World Citizenship, the International Trade Union Federation, the International Co-operative League, the International Student Service, the YM and YWCA, and the Red Cross. The United States affiliates and branches of all these organizations have their racial and nationality contacts well developed.

Such agencies should be considered not merely a source of personnel but channels for the actual implementation of the program. They are in a unique position to bring together the "outsider" and the "native" on the ground of common purpose; they represent, furthermore, the most internationally minded and the most democratic elements in Europe. They, more than the governments of Europe, have maintained, in belief and practice, the substance of democracy. As a span between the old Europe and the new, as well as between the Continent and the rest of the world, they are in a strategic position to develop the kind of functional democracy we have been talking about.

No reconstruction project would be complete without considering the Army. Its men will be present in greatest numbers in the Axis and occupied countries. Civil administration will be in their hands when the fighting stops. It is important, therefore, that the Army's role be geared in with the general reconstruction policy. Thousands of soldiers will be eager to put into constructive practice after the war the ideals for which they have been fighting, and they should be offered jobs in civil reconstruction when

THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE AND EUROPEAN RECONSTRUCTION

the Military Command is relieved of its authority. Such an opportunity, furthermore, would set up an ideological "base of operations" and go far to lift Army morale. Is it too much to ask that the Army begin selecting and training its men now for such tasks? National background, as well as educational training and occupational skill, should be qualifications governing the choice of men. As with non-combatants, the utilization of second-generation Americans offers opportunities for these young men to serve not only the cause of democracy, but the cause of Europe—a constructive sequel to the war.

The future of Europe is the future of the world. If democracy fails in Europe after this war, its chances of surviving elsewhere are slight. This is not the attitude of an alarmist but the lesson of history for the last 25 years—a lesson which was not believed until Dunkerque. The interdependence of world economy has created an indivisible moral

and political universe. The war we are fighting is not merely to preserve our democracy—any more than the fascists are fighting to preserve *their* fascism—but to determine which system shall be indivisible, freedom or slavery. In a sense this war will only begin when the shooting has stopped. That is why the whole democratic strategy must be laid now—a strategy for the progressive reconstruction of free institutions everywhere. The fascists have known all along what kind of world *they* want.

With this in prospect and in the knowledge that, once the dark night of chaos has been lifted, our values will be shared even by those we are fighting, should we delay in planning the kind of world we want?

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THE HERITAGE OF THE REFUGEE

MARTIN GUMPERT

IMAGINE yourself leaving your job at six o'clock in the evening, rushing to catch the train for Milwaukee, and waking up at eight o'clock the next morning in that city with a complete loss of speech. Or, better, with a complete loss of language, because your vocal chords are still able to form sounds, but nobody seems to understand the meaning of what you say.

This is approximately the essence of the metaphysical adventure of emigration into a foreign country. Certainly there is no great difference between the painful discovery of being struck by insanity and this sudden degradation of adult dignity into infantile helplessness.

And to make this nightmarish fairytale still more complete: you probably have carried along a volume of Shakespeare as a monk carries his breviary, and you get hungry around noon and you enter a drugstore. But the soda-jerker does not understand what you want. Then he gets curious and points at your book, and you open it and read a few lines. He starts to smile and his face gets friendly and kind. He says, "That sounds beautiful," and he puts a cup of coffee before you, and a big piece of buttered toast. And suddenly you understand each other. This is the miracle of human language.

Let us pretend I have no means of communication with you—as really happened to me when I arrived in this our country six years ago—and that I have no way of telling you why I came, why I had to flee my fatherland. But you of course

have a right to know and understand. I will recite the words of one of the most beautiful poems of my language, whose 18th century author, Matthias Claudius, may even be unknown to many of you:

Der Mond ist aufgegangen,
Die goldnen Sternlein prangen
Am Himmel hell und klar;
Der Wald steht schwarz und schweiget,
Und aus den Wiesen steigt
Der weisse Nebel wunderbar. . . .

I hope it is as beautiful to you as it is to me. This music of sound and tender thought is part of the German spirit that has made friends all over the world—and that is now dead in Germany itself.

And then I will read a few sentences of the ugliest and most confused sounds my German language has ever produced:

"Der neue Staat selbst kann keine andere Aufgabe kennen als die sinn-gemaesse Erfuellung der zur Forterhaltung des Volkes notwendigen Bedingungen. Indem er sie aus allen rein formalen republikanischen legitimistischen oder demokratischen Vorstellungen loest, wird seine Regierung ebenso Volksfuehrung sein, wie die aus den inneren voelkischen Bedingungen erwachsene Fuehrung des Volkes Regierung des Staates ist."

You may have already suspected that this is Hitler's voice. I beg you not to concentrate on the meaning of the sentence, which is simply idiotic, although no worse than thousands of other sentences that have grown in this brain. But

THE HERITAGE OF THE REFUGEE

I beg you to feel in it the degeneration of the German language, which now terrorizes my former country and which is more efficient in its degrading effect than the torture methods of the Gestapo.

And now you know why I am here and why I never want to go back. There is no worse crime and no worse injury to one's heart and soul than the betrayal of a language one has learned to love and revere through all the years of childhood and manhood.

I have struggled hard with the English language since I arrived, and it is not without a childish pride I offer you this self-styled speech. But at my age I shall never lose the accent that identifies me as of German origin, the accent that has formed my lips and the bones of my face and that I shall carry around to the end of my life, both as a symbol of honor and as a scar, because it was once the accent of Goethe and Matthias Claudius and because it is now the accent of Hitler.

Words are articulate music formed by the rhythm of history. Words are the mirror of landscape and emotions. Their eternal and colorful growth, their fading and decline, become part of the biological drama of life itself. You cannot understand either your friend or your enemy without at least listening to the sound of his language, and in times like these it seems almost more important to understand your enemies than your friends.

I have always considered the art of translation, unfortunately so maltreated, as a most fascinating one. Translation from one language into another symbolizes the imperfection and hybrids of every art, the inadequateness of expression in every field of the human mind, the dangers of words and sounds and gestures. But beyond this experience which teaches you a sort of sound modesty, you

will find the more astonishing experience; that you discover the greatness and depth of your own language the more you try to go away from it.

Language and laughter belong to the most noble distinctions of the human race, and where laughter is lost or where language is degraded or adulterated, there are danger and misery ahead. The richness of language, its nuances, contrasts, and ambivalences, its shades of tender and hard, of pious and obscene form the sacred treasure of a nation. And it is amazing how differently the image and the insight of different peoples are represented in the words of their language. I have never been an especially gifted linguist; I had never thought much about language before I was forced to by the necessity and desire to understand my new homeland and its people. But let me confess that this learning was not only helpful to me in becoming an American, but it gave me also an entirely new view of my German language and its problems.

There are problems that are no less mysterious after they have been solved, and I think the mystery of language is one of them because the deeper understanding of words opens the way to symbols of a mythological kind, to affections, emotions, and thoughts leading far back into our existence as individuals and as a group.

I arrived in this country poor as a beggar, not only robbed, by the Fuehrer and his gang, of my material goods but with the trauma of a devastating spiritual defeat. For the humaneness of Christianity and classic antiquity and the great ideal of human freedom that once was created and revered in Europe had vanished. For centuries strength and authority streamed from these ideals, even justified the vehemence of Europe's rise. They were the unique moral reserve of European history.

COMMON GROUND

All this had been denied and lost. Everything I was devoted to seemed spoiled. I did not feel I could easily substitute one homeland for another. I knew I would lead the life of a schizophrenic, my existence split.

And this is more than true. If I write my curriculum vitae, as one has to do so often as a newcomer, it shows this incoherent separation into a European and an American life. And the difference is much greater than you would believe. It is a difference not only in language and in social spheres, but in biological structures of time and space and climate. The historical clock in this country sounds another hour than in Europe. The mind of an American, however primitive or sophisticated, is organized differently from ours. Though we may discuss and worry about the same problems, though we may understand each other by the magic of humaneness and sympathy, we do not look at things the same way—you and I and my fellow emigres. Your basic experiences, your education, your morals, your traditions, your sorrows and joys have been quite different from ours.

But in my quality as a doctor I feel this to be not necessarily of tragic consequence. The basic problem of any therapy, when—as so often—you are unable to cure your patient, is to adapt him to his disease. Pain has to be tolerated to a certain degree, and disability and deformity also. To have a split personality or to suffer from some deficiency neurosis is not the worst thing on earth if you get accustomed to it instead of falling into obstruction and despondency or aggression. Disease—and being a refugee is from this point of view a serious disease—holds many potential creative values. Without suffering you will never feel relieved. And without being thrown out somewhere, you might never arrive somewhere else. Pain is the greatest activator of life, and you never feel as strong

as when you are convalescing from sickness.

The process of emigration gives you a forceful impulse to re-evaluate all your values. You find many of them bankrupt long since. You destroy and eliminate them with pleasure. But nothing could be worse than to become a heretic to your own self. Everybody who has loved Germany—and I think many of us have loved Germany sincerely and devotedly—must feel like Thomas Mann, who on his arrival in this country told ship reporters, "Where I am is Germany."

America has solved the mythological conflict of the Tower of Babel in a magnificent and unprecedented way. This country has shown for the first time in history that a nation can be a vehicle for ideas and morals, an instrument to proclaim, to protect, and expand a specific way of life, not an instrument of self-protection by defense, aggression, or isolation for a particular people or group of peoples and clans.

The basic task of the emigre, as I see it, is to avoid self-destruction and to re-evaluate his holdings, his heritage. The American Tower of Babel is not a force of evil which destroys and ravishes a gigantic creative plan, not the beginning of the end, but the start of a new constructive era of social life. There is harmony and rhythm in its chorus of a thousand tongues. And in order to be heard and listened to, every single voice must clear itself of hoarseness and cacophony. America acts like a sieve through which passes only the extract of our substance, not the debris. In this great competition of races and creeds, only those will survive who fit like a hewn stone into the rampart we watch.

In becoming Americans, we deposit our ballast of memories and traditions in the soil of our new homeland. There can be no mistake as to whether we harvest wheat or

THE HERITAGE OF THE REFUGEE

poison ivy. In our old country we did not feel responsible for the underworld of crime and disaster brewing under our feet, and we had to pay dearly for our mental laziness. Now the law of exile demands responsibility to the highest degree. It is left to us whether our exile will be a stigma of honor or disgrace. We have taken the bold step of forsaking our fatherland; we have done so not to throw away our heritage but to save it from certain decay.

Every heritage is a bundle of good and bad, of useful and useless. The first settlers of this country brought along from Europe their faith and their vice. Europe has not improved since then; nobody can expect us to be angels. But we have one virtue; the virtue of decision.

Every one of us—more or less voluntarily—made up his mind to leave Europe and come here. Whether or not we realized the hardships of exile, we made our choice to become strangers to our neighbors and strangers even to ourselves, abandoning our past and looking into an unknown future to keep our human dignity.

I remember quite clearly how I myself reacted to emigres years ago with a mixture of curiosity and suspicion, of pity and admiration. How I unconsciously resisted the invasion of this strange and incalculable sorrow penetrating from the outside into our inner circle. Until I became aware of the wisdom and blessings of miscegenation. There is no better trust of health and evolution and peace, no better remedy against premature senescence, than the intimate contact with something opposite oneself. The age-old law of hospitality and refuge is the beginning of civilization, and hostility against the stranger will always remain the foremost symptom of barbarism.

You have accepted us into your midst with great kindness and sincerity. I feel a bit like the merchant from the Orient spreading his treasures before the bewil-

dered eyes of his customer. Let me tell you our treasures are nothing more than promises and samples. We don't yet know what will fit or suit you. We are willing to forget and discard as we are willing to give and to fulfill. In this process of adaptation we have to do the work and you have to supply the patience. But there can be no doubt that, among the crop of our heritage, seeds will be found that belong in this soil because they belong to humanity, and that they will enrich and fertilize this vast continent.

This is a country of deserts and paradises, filled with utopias and still wide open to the imagination and creative dreams of the human mind. We unload our burden, our hopes and fears, on these shores which to us still mean the "New World"—not to regret our past, but to work with you for a common future.

It may sound blasphemous to speak of peace in a time when death plows the earth. But there will be peace, and there will be the day when the voice of Hitler is silenced and, with him, his crooked and evil distortion of the German language and the German mind. This is not a war among nations, but a world civil war for freedom, against slavery, and against slave drivers. Everybody who survives Hitler will have won this war, whether he be American or German. Then we refugees will be able to give back to a free and liberated Europe the heritage of European culture that we have salvaged and kept alive, a heritage forever impregnated with the American spirit, with the American way of life.

This was a speech by Dr. Martin Gumpert before the American Library Conference in Milwaukee in June. Author of First Papers and Dunant, the Story of the Red Cross, Dr. Gumpert became an American citizen last summer.

THE TOOTH-DENTIST

JEAN THOMAS

LONG before he became County Judge in Catlettsburg in Boyd County at the mouth of the Big Sandy River in the foothills of Kentucky, the tooth-dentist was a familiar figure plodding along lonely creeks, into quiet hollows, through sparsely settled timber and mining camps. A weather-beaten satchel dangled from a gnarled staff he carried over his shoulder and a dilapidated felt rested carelessly on his shock of reddish brown hair (inherited from Scotch-Irish ancestors). Tall, gaunt, he was in his young day, all of six feet in sock feet, if he was fortunate enough to have socks. A faded overcoat flapped around his knees, a long coat that quite hid the two great patches on the seat of his pants. But George G. Bell had three letters behind his name, for he had just finished working his way through college down in the Blue Grass. "Yonder goes the tooth-dentist," one told the other, "packin' his draw-ers in that there little black satchel."

They hailed him along the road—man, woman, or child with a swollen jaw. "Doc, have you got your draw-ers?" He would open the little satchel, take out his forceps, and extract an aching tooth by the roadside. He took for his pay a pat of butter, a slab of sow-belly, eggs, a hen, a pullet, if the patient had no cash money. But at the same time he had to keep his head on his shoulders.

And no two ways about it: he did respect the law. Some say it was because he respected the law so much he gave up tooth-doctoring, at long last, to follow it—to sit on the bench in court, to sit in

judgment on them that came before him. And they say his decision could rightly be laid at the door of young Luke Beasley.

The story goes that one day when Doc was making his way along Peevish Creek a young fellow came stumbling out of the woods toward him, rushing to this side of the road and that, and all the time gesturing wildly. At first Doc thought the fellow had had too much corn whiskey. After much gesticulation, for the lad could not speak, the tooth-dentist, putting down his kit, discovered the reason. The boy's jaws were clamped like a vise. The upper teeth lapped over the lowers. In the lower jaw, directly in front, a tooth was missing. The young dentist shook his head despairingly. Then the boy seized his arm and tugged him toward a little shack at the head of the hollow.

Here, at the Beasley home, tilting back in his chair against the rough wall, Jerry Beasley told casually how his son Luke had started with a misery in his jaw. Then it had gone from bad to worse, "till Luke's got in the fix you see." He spat toward the weed-grown foreyard. "When Luke ketched sight of you, Doc," he drawled, "we couldn't hold him back. He went on the run to head you off. He thinks bein' as you set that there false wax nose on little Feenie Talbot that never had no nose to begin with nohow, and taken that there busted bone outten Brack Kegley's jaw, and put chiny teeth, chiny like cups and saucers is made from, in old widder Estep's mouth so's she don't have to gum her vittals no more, Luke here's got the

THE TOOTH-DENTIST

notion you can do something for him, mebbe. But I don't favor no such." The old man let fly a stream of tobacco juice. "'Tain't that Luke ain't got sand in his craw."

He told how Luke "sot right there on the step-rock, whilst I put a nail ag'in his tooth. Just one good hard lick with the hammer ag'in the nail and that there tooth, roots and all, jumped right outten Luke's jaw. He never let out nary grunt." The old man's eyes glistened with satisfaction. "Luke's got sand in his craw, hi gad! Ever since then he sucks his vittals, milk and soup, and a leetle mush through that there hole where his tooth were. His jaws is gittin' tighter all the time. Been in this fix more'n twelve month, now."

While the father spoke, the son's shining eyes were fixed on the tooth-dentist.

"Jerry Beasley—" the young dentist turned on the old man with blood in his eye—"you ought to be tarred and feathered letting this boy get in this fix!"

"Hit's the Lord's will. We darsen—"

"Don't go layin' this on the Lord. He's got enough to do," the tooth-dentist said sharply. "It's your duty as a father to see that something is done for Luke. He ought to be taken to a hospital before it's too late."

But old Beasley would listen neither to persuasion nor reason.

"How old are you Luke?" Doc turned to the lad.

Quick as a flash he held up both hands, fingers widespread. Closed them quickly, opened one hand again, closed it. Then held up three fingers.

"Lawful age and free white!" said the tooth-dentist. And gathering up his staff with the dangling satchel, he hurled it back over his shoulder and stalked down the path. "Jerry Beasley, you ought to be tarred and feathered!" He shook his fist. "I just wish I was the County Judge! I'd handle you, Jerry Beasley, for what you're

doing to Luke here. Don't know but what I might call the law on you, nohow. Leastwise you ought to be tarred and feathered!" He stepped off resolutely, angrily, down the path muttering to himself, "I wish I was the County Judge! I'd give Jerry Beasley a sentence he'd never forget."



A few days later, Luke, strangely excited, presented himself at Doc's door. There were some perplexing gestures which the tooth-dentist couldn't fathom. He surmised, however, that Luke was

ready to go to the hospital, that all was well. They lost no time. They were soon on their way to the Blue Grass, where Luke was placed under the care of a skilled surgeon. Doc put down his staff and the weather-beaten satchel and stayed right at Luke's side till the first trying days were over. If Luke opened his eyes and Doc wasn't there, he let out a whoop that brought nurses and attendants on the run. Then Doc would drag up his chair closer and sit by the bedside and talk of fishing and hunting until Luke, smiling, finally fell off to sleep again.

It was not until long years afterward and Luke Beasley's jaws had been unlocked and he could speak once more that the tooth-dentist got the whole story. He was then himself at the point of death, with hope only through an emergency operation.

When he opened his eyes and saw only white walls and a feeble night lamp beside his bed, he thought either he was near the end or that the anaesthetic was playing queer pranks. There were hurried footsteps, muffled voices, and then—outside his door—a strangely husky voice, now defiant, now pleading:

"Lord God-a-mighty!" it said. "You can't do this to the tooth-dentist. God-a-mighty, I told You I'm plum sorrow for what I done to Pap long ago. I know I acted like a dog of the first water. But, Lord-God-a-mighty, don't take Doc!" There was a choking sob. "'Twarn't no night riders, nor Ku-kluxers, nor no tobacco-thievin' louts, like Pap tried to make out, that tarred and feathered him. I had it to do! So's me and the tooth-dentist could get off to the level land to the hospital and git my jaws unlocked. But nohow, dear God-a-mighty, I left Pap a bunch o' feathers around his middlins that there time, for to hide his shame. His life were spore. He lived many a year and was steppin' around spry as a cricket. You

spore Pap from that mess of tar and feathers. So there, God-a-mighty, set in judgment on me, if You're a-mind to, and let the law put me in the penitenshure, for all it's many a year since I done to Pap what I done. Let the Judge down to the county seat put me in irons, make me to eat bread and water all the rest o' my days. Only, Lord-God-a-mighty, revive up the tooth-dentist!"

When finally the tooth-dentist recovered, he told it himself he hadn't a doubt in the world but what he owed his life to Luke Beasley's prayers. "And what's more, I got the bee in my bonnet again, after all these long years since I was an itinerant tooth-dentist and yearned to see the law rightly enforced, to run for County Judge."

A man then in his fifties, the tooth-dentist had his own notions about campaigning for the office of County Judge. For one thing he capitalized on his name. Paper cut-outs in the shape of a bell dangled from thousands of trees along the highways and byways in Boyd County, reading:

Dr. Bell
The Dentist
Republican Candidate
For
County Judge

He used silhouettes of his head surmounted by the familiar dilapidated black felt he still chose to wear. He was no hand at picking a banjo or guitar, but when it came to singing a ditty or a ballad he was give up to be the singinest candidate that ever trod the banks of Big Sandy, Brushy or Bear Creek. Sang a ditty for a fretful child when he pulled its tooth, sang a ditty when he lanced the abscess on old Granny Tivis' jawbone. And though Boyd County, down at the mouth of Big Sandy, is and has been for many a year Demo-

THE TOOTH-DENTIST

cratic in politics, what with his tall tales and his ditty singing, the Republican tooth-dentist won.

As County Judge he said he aimed to be human—to combine pulpit and the court room. He wanted no “grass cutting”—no unfairness. He meant to “bury no warrants,” and he told the politicians as much. “I aim to try to draw a line between the needy and the wanty,” he said, too. He had a cartoon tacked on his wall in the court room, showing a score of types—men, women, children—approaching the bench, each with a hand extended. The wanty, always reaching to grab something, outnumbered the needy, said the Judge. He tried to do away with “roadside court,” his term for bond-making done in a hurry.

The new County Judge soon discovered there were all sorts of complaints. Lizzie wanted to sue Joshua for “failure to divide.” Another wanted “a piece of paper,” meaning the slip on which court orders for charitable aid are printed. “Mag Finney has put a cinder betwixt me and my man Jacob,” weeping Milly complained to the Judge, “and the Good Book says what God’s jined together, let no one put a-cinder.” He soon caught onto the young boys hanging around the clerk’s door where marriage licenses were issued; he watched them hurry away to fetch a “jack-leg” preacher. He was one of the nation’s few county judges who did not perform marriage ceremonies, believing “marriage is too sacred to have its beginning in the dirt of a court house.” More than once he set aside the marriage of twelve-year-old girls and committed them to an institution that they “might make something of themselves.” “The dignity of the court,” he often affirmed, “is best upheld by recognizing the dignity of humanity.”

Again he said, “I don’t administer justice according to the letter of the law, but

try to temper my judgment by placing myself in the position of the person before the bench.”

Almost from the first his unusual sentences for minor offenders began to attract attention.

There was little Willie Necuff (let’s call him) out on Cat’s Fork. “Wasn’t old enough to be dry behind the ears, scarcely,” said the Judge, “but Willie got hog-wild about girls. Drove off his mother’s calf, sold it for a trifle, and took widow Billup’s little girl to a movie down here at the county seat. I sentenced Willie up to 30 days in his sister’s dress. If you like girls so well,” I said to Willie, “you best dress like one for a while and see how that goes.”

He scratched the bald spot atop his head. “And there was Skid Harris. I’d sentenced Skid to 90 days in jail for habitual drunkenness. Then in the meantime along came Christmas. I got to thinking about Skid, a 58-year-old man layin’ there in jail, and his old gray-haired mother fretting herself to death over him. I called him into court. His 25 days had worked wonders with Skid. He stood erect and clean and clear-eyed. With me I had him repeat this oath: “To refrain from imbibing intoxicating liquors, to keep my mind clear and my body clean, to love and respect my God and my mother, and to so live my life that I may be a good example for my fellowmen.”

Then Skid’s old mother stepped beside him. Skid threw his arms about the stooped figure and kissed her trembling lips.

Then the Judge, as so often when sentencing a person, drew from under his desk a glass jar filled with stick candy. He presented Skid with a stick. “That you may know the taste of sweetness in life,” he said. “Now go home with your old mother and live your days in sobriety.”

There was Buck Turley, as no-account

a fellow as ever wore a shirt. His wife had Buck arrested because he wouldn't support her and the children. Fact was, Buck's wife took in washing to earn bread for all their mouths, including Buck's. Then he'd even steal her money and drink it up. The Judge could have sent Buck to jail for 30 days at hard labor. But instead, he sentenced him to washing for 30 days and—more than that—to deliver the laundry in a baby carriage. The fellows along the streets of Catlettsburg twitted him until—when his time was up at the washboard—he got a man's job and took care of his family.

Another time the Judge sentenced a drunkard to carrying a whiskey bottle filled with clear water and stopping to pull the cork and look at the bottle every time he approached any one on the street. The bystanders, as well as his friends, teased him for "carrying liquor outside instead of inside," so he quit drinking altogether and became a self-respecting, sober man.

"I figure," said the Judge, "that making a person appear ridiculous hurts worse than a jail sentence. I always try to make the punishment fit the crime, and I never forget that the person I'm sentencing is a human being just like me."

There was old Grandpa Snodgrass who refused to grant the County the privilege of crossing his place, when all that was needed was a bridge over a little creek. But the one-time itinerant tooth-dentist won the old fellow over. He made and gave Grandpa a gold bridge in his toothless mouth in return for a bridge over the creek—and left him crunching on a red-striped stick of candy. When His Honor went out to see widow Walker about the right-of-way through her farm—the County wanting to shorten the road that circled her place—she met him holding her apron to her mouth. He did most of the talking. Widow Walker hadn't a tooth in her head, for all she was not an

old woman. Too poor to afford a set. So the Judge agreed to give her a full set, uppers and lowers, if she'd sign the right-of-way. She vowed later, "Them new teeth taken 20 year off my life, and Jethro Paxton, a widow-man, is already courtin' me!" She beamed proudly, and she too, mouthed a stick of candy.

The Judge's greatest ambition was to complete "the missing link," the stretch of some twenty miles of unfinished road that joins the Big Sandy country with Boyd County along the Mayo Trail. To this end his services were loaned to Johnson County for a period of 30 days to secure the necessary right-of-way papers so that contracts could be let for hard-surfacing the unfinished road. "Give the Judge a few trinkets such as the old kitchen sink, a secondhand Ford, Grandma's wedding dress, and so on," the editor at the county seat observed, "and he'll come back with a pocketful of right-of-way deeds."

Once, during the Depression, when people didn't even have money enough to have a tooth extracted, the Judge built a house entirely by barter. "It's the house that shacks built!" he says, smiling broadly. He gathered up material from all over the county and town where houses were being torn down. People with aching teeth would come with timber, brick, stone, nails. Anyone who needed a new set came to offer labor or materials in exchange for dental services. So "the house that shacks built" grew and grew. When it was finished, he wrote a story about it and published it in *The Journal of the American Dental Association* and *the Dental Cosmos*. So well received was his literary effort he was asked for another. This he called "Fugitives From a Pain Gang," and yet another "Trader Born," using in part the stories of persons who had come to barter aches and pains for brick and stone and manual labor. But,

THE TOOTH-DENTIST

*Fugitives From a Pain Gang!*irate brothers of the dental profession, blood in eye, descended upon Doctor Bell. He had held their profession up to ridicule! He was trying to give the impression he was the only one who could relieve pain in the teeth!

When the spokesman of the irate band came to, he was in the middle of the road, flat on his bottom.

the little fellow, tugging nervously at the twig that took the place of a button in holding his galluses and breeches together. He bored a small toe against the floor. "I was bound to have me some strings for my banjer." He produced a homemade banjo he had whittled from white oak, the head of it made from the hide of a coon he had tanned in his own primitive way, the Judge found out by



Once the circus was in town and Judge Bell barred the door to his dental office a whole day. He was mending the atrocious plate, with the protruding tusks, of the wild man. "Most dapper, soft-spoken fellow I ever met. A college graduate, gone broke, seeing the country between times, while he earned himself a nifty piece of money as the wild man in the pit, wearing a shaggy black wig and a leopard skin to cover his nakedness. So pleased with my work he sent in the tattooed man and the fat lady!"

Once a little boy was brought before the Judge. "Johnny, don't you know you shouldn't have swapped your Ma's heifer for fifty cents?" he said kindly.

"But, your Honor, please, Judge," said

sniffing. "I had to have me some strings so's I could pick a tune at the Singin' Gatherin' off yonder on the Mayo Trail come the second Sunday in June."

Court adjourned. The Judge saw to it that Johnny got the new strings and—more—a brand-new shiny banjo. Then and there the little fellow picked a tune—a lonesome tune, "Down in the Valley," and sang, while the husky-voiced Judge joined in:

Roses love sunshine, violets love dew,
Angels in heaven, knows I love you.
Knows I love you, dear, knows I love
you,
Angels in heaven, knows I love you.

With the shining store banjo, Johnny

COMMON GROUND

trudged off home, crunching contentedly a red-striped stick of candy. As for Curt Skinner, who had defrauded the child and his widowed mother, the Judge sentenced him to "take care of the heifer for all of a year, till that heifer has her first calf, and furthermore, you, Curt Skinner, are to help this widowed mother of little Johnny with her crop, plowing, hoeing, grubbing for all of a year." Curt winced under the sentence but crunched his stick of candy as he left the court room.

During his term, Judge Bell completed one hundred miles of surfaced road in Boyd County and the "missing link" between Big Sandy and the foothills, cleaned up the Poor House, built cabins on the hillside for unfortunate charges of the county afflicted with tuberculosis, broke the youthful gang of "matrimony runners," and never failed to hand out a stick of candy to man, woman, or child when passing sentence upon him.

The press carried many an interesting story of his unusual sentences. He was invited to appear on "We, the People." Of that, his first trip to New York City and his first appearance before a microphone,

the one-time itinerant tooth-dentist, His Honor, the Judge, said, "I was scared plum out of my wits. My tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. If I had been before a Judge on trial for my life, I couldn't have been worse scared!"

When he failed to win the nomination for re-election, he said with a broad grin, "Might have fared better if I'd a-handed out pickles instead of candy." Then scratching his bald head, "Wisht I was a young blood again. Hi gad! I'd like to shoulder my staff and satchel and strike out up one creek, down another, into this quiet holler and t'other off yonder. I'd like to hear folks call out as I trudge along, 'Yonder goes the tooth-dentist, packin' his draw-ers in that there little black satchel.'"

Jean Thomas, author of Blue Ridge Country, is the founder of the American Folk Song Society. Her account of its annual Singin' Gatherin' appeared in our Summer 1942 issue.

The illustrations are by Bernadine Custer.

NAMES

LOUIS ADAMIC

WŁODZIMIERZ KRZYZANOWSKI, a political refugee from Austrian Poland, arrived in the United States in the 1850s. His name was pronounced Vuo-jeem'yesh Kshi-zhan-noff'skee.

At the outbreak of the Civil War he enlisted as a private in the Union Army and with bravery and extraordinary competence swiftly advanced to the rank of colonel and the command of a regiment of Danish, German, Polish, and Russian immigrants serving under General Schurz. Most of his non-Polish soldiers referred to him as "Kriz" or "the Colonel." At Bull Run he distinguished himself as commander of a brigade, whereupon, on the recommendation of Generals Schurz and Grant, President Lincoln nominated him for promotion to brigadier general. But the nomination got entangled in the political machinations of the Senate Military Committee and was not reported out. Some of the machinations were anti-Lincoln, others issued from Know-Nothingism. The senatorial semi-public explanation, however, was that none of the Senators was able to pronounce "Krzyzanowski." The nomination later was resubmitted and confirmed, and General Krzyzanowski became the first United States governor of Alaska.

In the spring of 1939 I spoke to a group of Polish Americans, most of them college graduates, in a large eastern city. During the discussion period I was asked (as I invariably am by someone in any Polish American audience) what I thought of

changing Polish names. Because his picture as a very handsome Union officer hung on the wall behind me, I told the story of Włodzimierz Krzyzanowski, although I knew it was well known to most in my audience. (I was not sure that I pronounced his name quite as I should have, and felt a little uneasy.)

Then, not without suspecting that I was near a hornets' nest, I suggested it might be advisable to simplify those Polish names which non-Polish Americans found difficult—as it would be advisable, I hastened to add, to simplify Greek, Lithuanian, Croatian, Slovenian, Serbian, Ukrainian, Czech, Slovak, Italian, Hungarian, Armenian, Jewish, Syrian, Finnish, and all other names which were jaw-breakers to the average American. I said, however, that as a general rule such names need not and should not be translated or transliterated into English; their original character, or some semblance of it, ought to be retained. By way of illustration, I told of a man I knew in Chicago who had—to my mind, sensibly—modified his name from Sleszynski to Slesinski "because the 'szy' was a stumbling-block to all non-Poles." I mentioned too the well-known New York Polish American, Stephen Mizwa, head of the Kosciuszko Foundation, whose name had been originally Mierzwa, and the famous actress Helena Modjeska and her equally famous engineer-son Ralph Modjeski whose original name was Modrzewski.

There was a little applause. A few people seemed to agree with me. The chair-

man asked the audience if there were any more questions.

A tense young man shot up. Clipping off his words in a sharp tone, he begged permission to speak; he meant to ask me several questions. He said his name was Krzyzanowski too, and he was a grand-nephew of the man whose picture hung on the wall. Then he tore into me with hot, eloquent indignation. On the basis of my none too successful pronunciation of Krzyzanowski he assumed that I considered the name "difficult." Did I mean to suggest, he demanded, that his grand-uncle General Włodzimierz Krzyzanowski should have "simplified" it? If so, would it interest me to learn that President Lincoln and Generals Grant and Schurz had never felt free to make such a suggestion to General Krzyzanowski? And why not? Because they were men of taste. They were considerate of others. They would have thought it tactless and presumptuous to suggest anything of the sort.

How would I have "simplified" it? demanded Mr. Krzyzanowski. And while we were on the subject, would I have wanted Pulaski and Kosciuszko to "simplify" their names? He desired to state that it had never occurred to their Commander-in-Chief, General George Washington, to so affront them. And why not? George Washington was a gentleman! George Washington knew that by virtue of everything in them "Pulaski" and "Kosciuszko" were *their* names. While here I was, Mr. Krzyzanowski continued with cold fury, telling a gathering of American Poles to "simplify" their names! Did I wish to advise him personally to change the name which Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant respected and honored? To what? To Smith or Kent or Rice or Brown or Jones? Or would I prefer shortening it to Kryz or Kriz or Chris, or Zyzanowsky, Zanowski or Nowski? How many syllables would I like him to discard? And how

would I decide which I wanted to retain?

Did I not realize that by favoring modification of "foreign" names I was yielding to the worst element in the United States—to the stupid, provincial, narrow, egocentric Americans, so-called, of the older strains; to people like those United States Senators in the sixties who had refused to confirm the promotion of General Krzyzanowski because of their anti-foreign prejudice; to persons who were psychologically closer to Hitler and Mussolini than to Lincoln and Washington!

If he "simplified" his name, Mr. Krzyzanowski went on, he would be catering to those Americans who were too lazy to attempt to pronounce it. Have not millions of Polish immigrants been obliged to learn such difficult names as Hough-telling, Willoughby, Dwight, Hughes, Maugham, Cholmondeley, Postlethwaite, and Cavanaugh? Instead of giving Polish Americans such advice why didn't I go around to old-stock Americans—the D.A.R.'s, say, or the Colonial Dames—and tell them to snap out of their Anglo-Saxon smugness and learn how to pronounce Polish names, which were also American? Why didn't I tell them what they should have known long ago: that Poles were with Captain Smith at Jamestown and played an important role in saving the Colony? Why didn't I tell them to stop monopolizing American history and to accept Pulaski, Kosciuszko and Krzyzanowski as important figures therein? They ought to get used to respecting Polish Americans and their Polish names, even if at first glance they did look a little "difficult."

Mr. Krzyzanowski sat down amid a burst of applause. Everybody had listened to his dramatic remarks with taut attention. Some of the same people who had agreed with me five minutes earlier now seemed either to agree with him or to like the passion of his utterance. I was ex-

NAMES

pected to reply. Should I try to point out that he resembled the smug, old-stock, Anglo-Saxon Americans he condemned?

I was considering this while the chairman was beating about the bush for me, remarking at some length that all Poles and Polish Americans were proud of General Włodzimierz Krzyżanowski. Then, since the meeting was small and informal, I decided to ask how many people in the audience agreed with the implication of Mr. Krzyżanowski's questions. Four or five hands went up with no "maybe" about them, and one or two somewhat uncertainly. How many disagreed? One young man raised his hand, and I made a note of him in my mind. How many did not know what to think? One hand almost went up, but didn't. It looked as though the rest of the audience did not want to commit itself—yet.

I asked the young man who had disagreed with Mr. Krzyżanowski if he would care to say something.

He hesitated; then, to my relief, he answered, "Yes." He said his name was Belby, and he was a native American of Russian and Polish parentage. But once upon a time, he added, his name had been Bialoblonski.

"It's all very well," he went on, "for Mr. Krzyżanowski to stand up for the name which was distinguished in the United States by his grand-uncle. Personally, I think Mr. Krzyżanowski should not change to Jones or shorten to Zanowski, even if not one American in a thousand knows about General Krzyżanowski. At least, I don't think I would give it up if it were my name, even if I had to spend a lot of time telling the world how to pronounce it. It must be something to have an important name when one isn't very much—I am speaking of myself now. I think too that anybody in the United States who happens to be Pulaski or Kosciuszko or Modjeski should retain his

name. They are accepted by the educated in this country as names in American history, although I don't doubt they are not stressed enough, particularly in schools attended by a lot of youngsters of Polish parentage. Also if one's name should happen to be Paderewski, one should remain Paderewski."

Mr. Belby continued:

"It's a different kettle of fish, though, when your name is not distinguished and the question before you is, 'Little man, what now?' Till I was twenty-two Bialoblonski was a constant embarrassment to me. I was always regarded as a 'foreigner' in spite of my American birth. In college it kept me out of fraternities. Once, after a girl had introduced me to her family, her mother told her not to have anything to do with me. I know this is all crazy, but it was serious enough then. I could tell you three or four other experiences which were hard to take although now I can recall them with some detachment.

"When I looked for work, I had to spell my name over and over again, and I knew from the employment manager's expression that I would not be taken on. I needed a job more than anything else, and . . . well, I was up against hard facts of life and human nature, which no romantic notion about one's name could contravert.

"Then I was hired in spite of my name. It seemed almost too good to be true.

"A few weeks later my boss gave me a fatherly talking-to. I should change my name. He himself, of Czech and German blood, had translated his from Kovacs to Smith. He was sure that with his original name he would never have been able to develop his business, and he predicted I would not get very far as Bialoblonski. I would always be regarded as a 'Rooshen' or a 'Polack' or a Jew, but if I adopted some 'simple name' he would train me to become a buyer. He liked me, he said, but

he could not afford to send me around the country as a representative of his firm under the name of Bialoblonksi.

"I could not tell him—and the world—that a grand-uncle of mine, General Bialoblonksi, had fought with Ulysses S. Grant in the Civil War—"

Several people laughed out loud and the audience began to relax.

"I couldn't say," Mr. Belby resumed, "that I was specially proud of my name. As a matter of fact, I wasn't. It was a pain-in-the-neck.

"Since *bialo* means 'white,' I thought of calling myself White or Whitehouse. But when I broached it to my folks, a storm broke out. 'Bialoblonksi' did not mean much to my mother, but it did to my father. He said if I dropped it he never wanted to see me again. He did not speak to me for a week. But mother worked on him, and in the end we settled on Belby."

Laughter.

I did not have to say anything more that evening. Touched off by Messrs. Krzyzanowski and Belby, people needed little encouragement to talk about their names. Some said they had no difficulty—"or," in the next breath, "almost none." One maintained that most of the "name trouble" was imagined. The majority, however, told of experiences and inner perplexities that sounded very real. And while all the statements were highly subjective, together they gradually restored the audience to a balanced attitude.

"My name used to be Paczkowski," said a young lady, "which to non-Poles was a tongue-twister. I had to spell it endlessly, but people often misunderstood me and wrote it down wrong. Once I was refused a job because the employer assumed I was Jewish. People used to laugh at my name; I heard remarks like, 'Well, she's a Polack!' This hurt; it seemed so unfriendly and as though people of Polish blood were inferior! . . . One day when

I was ordering something by mail, I just couldn't write 'Paczkowski,' so I put down 'Pace.' I was not home when the package came, and there was trouble that night at supper. My parents are proud of being Polish, and I had to promise them I would never do it again. Then," she added, "I married a man named Sunbury. His name used to be something like Sonofski; he isn't even sure how it was spelled. Neither of us is ashamed of our Polish descent, but it is much simpler to be Mrs. Sunbury than Mrs. Sonofski or Miss Paczkowski."

Another young woman said: "My parents' name is Kopankiewicz. My older brother was called Copey at school, which was all right with him and he went into the Navy as Copey. My younger brother is still Kopankiewicz. On the whole, we had no trouble worth mentioning when we were children. We lived in a Polish neighborhood and went to school with other boys and girls of Polish parentage. . . . In business college, though, I was advised to change my name, but I didn't. I knew my father wouldn't like it, although he probably would not say anything. I got a job in the filing office of the Mid-town Department Store. The manager called everybody else Miss So-and-so but called me just Josephine. . . . Then I applied for a job in the Junior Misses department, where girls are paid better. They told me bluntly there was only one thing against me: a girl called Miss Kopankiewicz could not work at a counter, where customers might ask her for her name. . . . Our family likes to read, and we are all very proud of Joseph Conrad, whose original Polish name was Josef Konrad Korzeniowski; so I became Josephine Conrad—but only on the job; otherwise I stick to Kopankiewicz."

The editor of a Polish-language paper recalled the term "consciousness of kind" originated by the sociologist Giddings.

NAMES

"People like to recognize others of the same derivation, and names help. That is why readers who stick to their Polish names write in to my paper every week denouncing people who Anglicize theirs. Not that I condemn the latter, but I understand too those who retain their old names. All over the country are Polish Americans named Young and Smith and Williams; they are doing good work or even important work, but we don't know about it; if we knew they were of our stock, it would help us in our hours of trouble. When we hear that Mr. Simpson, the engineer building this bridge or that dam, is really the son of an immigrant called Szczypiorski, a thrill comes to us. Polish papers print the news and Polish Americans everywhere feel a little better about themselves, but at the same time a little uneasy because young Szczypiorski had felt obliged to become Simpson.

"Some years ago a ship sank in mid-Atlantic and another ship rescued its crew and passengers. The captain of the rescuing ship was hailed as a hero. In the Associated and United Press dispatches his name was given as Captain Michaels, but I knew he was the son of my late friend Majchrowicz; it did my heart good to read about his heroism. I published his identity in our paper and then I received a lot of letters from readers, thanking me for the information. But all of us regretted that the big English-language papers in New York and Chicago and Buffalo and Detroit and elsewhere reported only the Anglicized form of the hero's name. It would have meant so much to us all if the American public knew that one of our kind had done a brave deed."

Someone told the ancient joke about the Irish policeman who found a drunk on the corner of Second Avenue and Kosciuszko Street. The cop could not pronounce Kosciuszko, so he carried the

drunk a block to Second Avenue and Lafayette Street before he called the station for the patrol wagon.

Still another young woman said: "In high school, I was almost never Helen Golembiovski but 'that Polish girl.' For a while I tried to tell people I was an American, born here; it did no good. My brother had trouble too; nothing very serious, but unpleasant. Sometimes boys would yell after him, 'Johnny Golembiovski—give 'im a kick in the pantski!' We didn't change our name and we try to be philosophical about annoyances. My sister, who married a Polish American with a name even 'worse' than ours, feels the same way. We can take it. I think some day names like Golembiovski and Derensky will be as respected in America as Pulaski and Paderewski. When we new Americans get over our 'foreigner' inferiority complex, there are going to be great artists, writers, scientists, engineers, and political leaders with such names—lots of them—and then it will be a great thing to be Golembiovski or Derensky, and cops won't move drunks when they find them on Kosciuszko Street."

Applause and laughter.

"Meantime," Miss Golembiovski went on, "all we need is a little backbone. I think I agree with Mr. Krzyzanowski, although now and then I weaken and feel tolerant toward people who modify their names. But I think this sort of thing is encouraging: I know two American-born men of Polish descent who six or eight years ago Anglicized their names—one from Baroszewicz to Barton, the other from Kowalczy to Smith. For a while they were a little more comfortable, but not much happier—names are a funny thing. Then they began to be impressed by what they heard about Poland. One of them read Eve Curie's biography of her mother. . . . Well, Mr. Smith has already changed his name partway back—to

COMMON GROUND

Kowal—and Barton is seriously thinking of doing the same thing.”

A middle-aged man with a heavy, melancholy face and a slight accent announced, bowing to Miss Golembiovski in the Old-World manner, that he too meant to keep the “difficult” name he had brought to America thirty-odd years ago. “It has,” he said, “a sort of mystic personal significance to me, which perhaps only those of Polish heritage can fully understand. It has value as a cultural and nostalgic tie to Poland. Who of any sensitivity would deny me this? The bother I have had spelling my name and teaching people to pronounce it only served to enhance that value and deepen that significance.”

The gentleman broke off, thinking. As we waited for him to go on, there wasn’t a sound in the room.

“Alas,” he continued, “many Americans born here of Polish parentage are unhappy, uneasy about their names. As some of you have suggested, this is all wrong, but perhaps it is beyond our power as individuals or as Polish Americans to right it in time to do any good. In fact, nearly everything that has been said here tonight makes me sad. I am a citizen of the United States. I love America as I love Poland—more than Poland (some of you will know what I mean); but I am confused. There is a pain in me. One of my brother’s sons Anglicized his name before he entered the Military Academy at West Point, which was created by a Pole, Kosciuszko! I was miserable about this because in the old country only criminals change their names. It was not required of my nephew; he simply thought it would help him, although in the last

ten years a good many young Americans of Polish descent have graduated from the Academy without discarding their parents’ names.”

He paused again, then:

“I have a friend who once called himself Grzywaczewski, an old honored Polish name. He is now Gary. He lives far from this city; none of you know him; and so I can talk of him. His son was called John G. and was given his diploma, with apologies by the principal, as John G. Nobody tried to pronounce his last name. The boy was brilliant and wanted to go to Princeton. He aspired to teach in a college. One of the daughters had difficulties too. For years there was a perpetual family crisis on account of the name. So now after much agony the whole family were renamed Gary. Personally, I am sorry, but who am I to blame my friend Grzywaczewski or my nephew at West Point?”

A distinguished-looking man rose briefly to remark in an impersonal voice that the dropping of “foreign” names for English ones was “social mimicry.” Except in unusual circumstances it should not be approved. It indicated a tendency to conformity which was “childish—and perhaps un-American if Longfellow’s and Thoreau’s ideas on non-conformism may be regarded as part of Americanism.”

This is a chapter from Louis Adamic’s forthcoming volume, What’s Your Name? to be published by Harpers in September. This will be the third book in his Nation of Nations Series, of which From Many Lands was the first and Two-Way Passage the second.

MANZANAR—RELOCATION CENTER

ROBERT L. BROWN

MANZANAR is most startling to those who approach it late at night. After driving from Los Angeles for three hours across the silent wastes of the great Mojave desert, with only an occasional car passing, and only one small town of less than a thousand population to break the solitude of the stars, the traveler rounds a small hill and is confronted suddenly with the lights of a city of 10,000 persons, sweeping upward over a mile square toward the silhouetted wall of the Sierra Crest, 14,000 feet high.

"So *that's* Manzanar!" he exclaims. "Wonder what's going on there? How do you suppose they're taking it?"

For Manzanar in Owens Valley is one of the War Relocation Centers where 120,000 evacuees of Japanese descent are housed for the duration. Under the lights here, pretty well at peace with the world, 10,000 of them are sound asleep on Army-type cots in Army-type barracks, their stomachs full of good substantial food supplied through the Army quartermaster and cooked by their own cooks in 36 standard Army kitchens, served mess-hall style.

A few men are still awake: those on the night crew to watch the water system, night janitors, firemen, and the internal police—all Japanese Americans—and there may be a few card or goh games still going on in muffled tones. Some younger men are still earnestly or heatedly debating the latest rumor or their present predicament. But these are a mere handful. There has never been an

enforced curfew within the boundaries of Manzanar. Its people, like people all over the world, are normal. When it comes time to go to bed, they're tired; they go to sleep.

And if, by chance, the Army sentry in one of the four searchlight towers becomes playful and swings his searchlight down on a house so that it shines in a window and awakens one of the sleepers, he gets angry: "I wish those damn' sentries would keep their lights out of my window. You'd think we were in a concentration camp!"

To get the over-all picture of the tremendous task of building and staffing Manzanar and all the other War Relocation Centers for evacuees from West Coast areas designated by military authority, imagine, if you will, any town of 10,000 in America—in Vermont, Michigan, Alabama, Washington. Then try to imagine someone handing you an order to go out and build a duplicate town with an executive crew of 30 people and a construction crew of 400, the whole thing to be done in 90 days including water system, sewer system, and buildings. To top that, the instructions read that 7 days after work is started, the first 1,000 inhabitants will move in.

Thus was Manzanar started.

Eighty-three volunteers arrived first. They came in three busloads. Included in the group were stenographers, a woman doctor and a nurse, a male doctor, and 60 kitchen workers.

COMMON GROUND

The doctors immediately set up an emergency hospital. Kitchen crews piled into cases of food stacked in the middle of the first block, which then consisted of four buildings without windows or doors. They arrived at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. By 6, everybody had been fed, camp style, sitting on packing boxes and eating on paper plates—but fed. By 9, beds were ready, and Manzanar camp life had begun.

At 10 o'clock, somebody thought there should be a "house count" to see if everybody was present. The count turned up one missing. A second and more careful count was taken. Still one missing! Everyone became concerned, and Japanese as well as Caucasians turned out to hunt the missing person.

He was found in about fifteen minutes. A caterpillar ditch digger had cut a line ditch for the sewer pipe, an excavation about 6 feet deep and 15 inches wide. At night and without lights, a cook, a little hefty about the waist as some cooks get, had walked into the ditch and was wedged tightly in the bottom.

This has been Manzanar's only case of a "missing person."

Two days after the coming of the first 83 "pioneers," approximately 1,000 "volunteers" arrived. Some came by automobile in a 140-car caravan led by Army jeeps; others by special train. Within those two days California's fastest-growing city increased from 4 buildings to nearly 40.

At Manzanar, many of these "volunteers" could get work for the first time for which they had been trained. In the cities a Japanese American boy who had been graduated from a university with an engineer's ticket often found it next to impossible to get a job in a Caucasian firm as an engineer. Prejudice kept the doors of opportunity closed; many gave up the fight and took on

"apple polishing" jobs in the fruit-stand markets.

But in Manzanar there was immediate and urgent need for highly trained personnel of all kinds. A city of 10,000 has countless tradesmen and supply houses to keep the wheels of living moving. Work normally done by these people had to be organized and directed by the management. There had to be police and fire protection; maintenance of sewage disposal and water supply; distribution of food; garbage disposal; ground maintenance; a communication system; a transportation system; a public health service and a hospital. Cities of 10,000 have a city council, and should, if they do not, have a planning commission; they have churches and schools and newspapers; places of entertainment and stores. Furthermore, all these things grow gradually as the normal city of 10,000 grows.

But at Manzanar they had to be created immediately, almost overnight, by a management at first consisting of 12 men, later expanding to not more than 40 Caucasians.

So the Japanese Americans found plenty of opportunity for work. The first arrivals, especially, looked upon themselves as pioneers. Manzanar had earlier been a pioneer community in the '60s, when Middle-Western farmers, after the overland trek to California, had settled on the rich land of George's Creek and planted apple trees there—hence "Manzanar," from the Spanish "apple orchard." But the City of Los Angeles, in its search for water, bought out all the farmers of Manzanar early in this century and by 1933 had turned the land back to sagebrush, with only the hardiest of the original apple trees surviving. The first arrivals were quick to learn this background of the land they were to call home, and rapidly accepted the pioneer challenge.

Two former newspaper men saw im-

mediately a need for a clearing house of information between the administration and the evacuees. They presented a plan to the management and found themselves within the hour in charge of "Internal Information," which grew from an empty barrack and a bulletin board to a staff of 53 information experts in 6 major offices within two months. The work these boys and their staff did in the early stages of development was invaluable to the management. When self-government was organized and block leaders elected to a central council, the information clerks moved into the larger scheme of management as clerks to the block representatives and were able to bring with them intimate knowledge of administrative machinery and policy which insured a smooth functioning of the block leaders' duties from the very inception of the program.

A young architect was given the task of organizing what might be termed the City Planning Commission. With a crew of assistants he began work immediately at an over-all landscape plan for the Center, under the general supervision of the Caucasian chief engineer. Today this plan is well on its way to realization.

Other engineers found themselves running the water and sewer system; young businessmen were put in charge of warehouses and supply. A girl with an excellent record in State Civil Service in personnel work took charge of all personnel records and within a short while had a staff of 20 clerks who compiled records on all people in camp. Newspaper hopefuls, a few with actual experience and others with high school or some college newspaper experience and a great desire to be professional news-hawks, found their way to the staff of the Manzanar Free Press, a mimeographed sheet, and first "newspaper" to be published in any of the relocation or evacuation centers.

But these opportunities for the evacuees were not the Utopia they first seemed; the other side of the story soon became apparent with the arrival of more people. As in any city of 10,000 there were more people qualified for certain jobs than there were jobs. The early volunteers had, of course, settled into the so-called "best jobs." A familiar cry made the rounds, a cry heard in other cities of 10,000 or cities of 2,000 or cities of 2,000,000. . . .

"How did that guy get that job?"

"Where do you get the pull to get on this crew?"

"I've got 10 years' experience and he has only 2 years—it's a gyp!"

And as in any other community, adjustments were made. By and large, Manzanar residents hold jobs on ability just as, by and large, people in other communities hold jobs on ability. As new work opportunities develop, there is a shifting of personnel. There are advancements on merit, and some workers get dismissed for not doing the job as it should be done.

In all the relocation centers, evacuees are provided with room, board, and hospitalization. In Manzanar families are together in partitioned barracks, four apartments to the building. Single men and women have separate large barracks. The Center is divided into 36 blocks of 15 buildings each. Each block has its own kitchen and mess hall and its own recreation building. Showers, toilets, and laundry rooms are located in separate buildings in the center of each block. A 250-bed hospital is completely equipped and staffed by Japanese American doctors and nurses. A children's village near it houses nearly 100 orphans. The Center has a community general store where residents may purchase anything from soda pop to pajamas, and will very soon have community barber and beauty shops, shoe repair shops, and other

COMMON GROUND

tradesman types of enterprises necessary to life in any city of 10,000.

Those employed on projects or work details within the Center are given a monthly cash advance according to the type of work done. Those who do not work receive no remuneration. Cash advance for workers is divided into three groups: for work rated as unskilled, \$12.00 a month; skilled, \$16.00; and professional, \$19.00. Unskilled work includes general maintenance jobs, beginning typists, carpenter's helpers, or cub reporters; skilled work includes carpenters, truck drivers, stenographers, cooks, electricians; and professional classification covers doctors, registered nurses, editors, engineers, and those who qualify as sub-heads of departments.

Beside the general functions of Center operation, residents are employed on an Army project in the completion of camouflage nets; in farming, with an anticipated 3,000 acres in production at Manzanar by next year; and in an experimental program of growing guayule, the rubber-producing plant. With 2,000 children in school this fall, and 4,000 persons now employed—both men and women—and with an additional 2,000 to be added to the payroll when new projects are developed, Manzanar will be utilizing close to 100 per cent of its employable manpower.

General opinion is that the Japanese Americans are primarily agriculturalists. Yet records show only about 40 per cent have a distinctly rural background. Consequently Manzanar, with limited agricultural possibilities at the outset, is being looked on more and more as a potential manufacturing center. Among other things, a clothing manufacturing project to supply work clothes to all evacuees is being established.

Life outside of working hours follows a pattern similar to that in any other American community. The Nisei, second-

generation Japanese Americans, continue to live and act and think as do any Caucasian youngsters of like age groups. Especially is this true if they are kept busy.

I am constantly amazed on entering offices where people are at work drafting or filing, to hear strains of the latest Benny Goodman or Artie Shaw swing record hummed or whistled softly as work goes on. Dances, held regularly to the strains of the latest popular records, bring out the "jitter-bugs" as do dances in the "Palaces" and "Winter Gardens" all over America. On the Fourth of July the Center held a "Queen Contest" and elected the most popular Miss, who was crowned with as much gaiety as thousands of others throughout the country.

And let none say the Nisei have no sense of humor. The Center was divided into districts almost immediately by incoming people. It has its Beverly Hills, its Hollywood, its Westwood, and I suppose its "South of the Slot," though this hasn't as yet appeared in print. Apartments have all manner of fancy names: "Sierra Manor" is quite common; "Jerks Jernt" is perhaps the most modern and bizarre. There is the "Town House," "Ambassador," and the "Beverly-Wilshire," named with fine irony after three of the best hostels in Los Angeles. The whole camp chuckled at an item appearing in the Free Press asking the women to stop using the laundry tubs for baths—use the showers instead—as "it is hard on the tubs."

For recreation, the top sport is baseball. Driving around the Center in the evening, one gets the impression that everybody is playing baseball. Actually there are over 150 teams and some 20 leagues. Two full pages of each issue of the Free Press are devoted to baseball scores and briefs of the best games. Feeling that the paper was getting overbalanced in this direction, I suggested to the editor that

MANZANAR—RELOCATION CENTER

the staff play down a little on sports and try to get more news of a general nature. A howl went up immediately. The baseball scores were the best and most highly valued news items in the paper!

Through all the standard pattern of life at Manzanar, however, runs the river of doubt—the fear of the future. By far the great majority of the residents are simple folk who are unable to comprehend the full significance of the evacuation. They were moved because it was war and the Army said to move. They know that if they had not moved there would have been trouble between themselves and their Caucasian neighbors. They feel safe and protected, and for this protection the vast majority are openly grateful.

“But after the war—what happens?” is the question in every adult mind.

Mothers are worried about their daughters’ ability to keep house and make a home for prospective husbands “after we leave here,” as daughters now are enjoying a freedom from housekeeping, cooking, and dishwashing that is usually only a wishful dream of young brides.

Fathers shake their heads and say that the lack of competition, the government-created jobs, will cause their boys to become soft and lazy and ill fit them for the hard work that must come “when this is over.”

Where to live and what to do afterward is a constant topic.

“We must scatter, spread ourselves thin over the country,” cautions one elderly leader. “We have lived too long in Little Tokyos all over the country. Our Caucasian neighbors do not know us. We trade among ourselves, have our own friends, and live apart from the country we are now frantically trying to cling to. No one knows us.”

“We have the poorest public relations

program of any group in America, with the possible exception of the Jews,” says another young Nisei, graduate of a Pacific Coast university. “It may be too late to do much about it, but after the war we should organize a bang-up press and public relations program to let the rest of America really know what we are like.”

Another put it this way: “You know what the trouble here is? Here at Manzanar we have security without a future. One of the best traits of our people has been that we have always supported ourselves—have always made our own way. Now the government pays our way, and we have security in having our food and lodging furnished. If the war were to end tomorrow, what would we have? Maybe what we need is less security of the kind we’re getting and more chance for a future, which we’re not getting—yet.”

There lies one of the dangers of the program, of course. The danger of paternalism. Call it what you will, it cannot be denied that the very protection afforded the 120,000 evacuees in a time of war, in the manner in which it is being accomplished today, will isolate these people from the realities of everyday existence. And to compete in everyman’s world of the future will be difficult if one has not lived through the stress and strain of the times—been conditioned to living, for example, in 1948 by having lived through the years from 1942 to 1948.

A sick man who has been in bed for a year has to learn to walk all over again. To accomplish this he has helping hands—his nurse, his family, his friends.

What the war will do to the thinking of the American public, to condition its help or non-help when 120,000 Japanese Americans try to walk again, is the big question-mark of the program.

Perhaps the answer lies in keeping the

COMMON GROUND

patient on his feet—to let him walk enough each day never to forget how. This is an important part of the federal government's program in working toward self-sufficing and self-governing communities for evacuees, where there is useful work to do—work in the development of natural resources which will keep skills in good trim and provide opportunity for the young to develop useful arts and crafts.

Robert L. Brown, a native resident of Owens Valley, is now Public Relations Director at Manzanar Relocation Center.

The West Coast evacuation program was first in the hands of the Wartime Civil Control Administration of the Army's Western Defense Command, which established 18 temporary Assembly Centers for citizens and non-citizens of Japanese descent. From these the evacuees are

moved to Relocation Centers, permanent for the duration, under the civilian control of the War Relocation Authority, headed by Dillon Myer. (Milton Eisenhower, who first headed it, is now with the Office of War Information.)

The Relocation Centers include Manzanar at Manzanar, California, with an approved capacity of 10,000; Colorado River at Poston, Arizona, 20,000; Tule Lake at Newell, California, 16,000; Gila at Sacaton, Arizona, 15,000; Minidoka at Eden, Idaho, 10,000; Heart Mountain at Cody, Wyoming, 10,000; Rohwer at Rohwer, Arkansas, 10,000; Jerome at Jerome, Arkansas, 10,000; Central Utah at Delta, Utah, 10,000; and Granada at Granada, Colorado, 8,000.

Movement of evacuees to four of these Relocation Centers is nearly complete as we go to press, and two more are expected to open in mid-August.

THIS ISN'T JAPAN

MARY OYAMA

VALLEY FORGE" is four doors over from "Grand Central Station"; across the street "Dreamsville" adjoins "Higa's Den." This is Santa Anita Assembly Center, in itself a paradoxical anomaly.

Here thousands of Americans with Japanese faces, evacuated from their Pacific Coast homes, are taking internment in stride and managing despite many inconveniences and hardships, to maintain their sense of humor and "Yankee" fortitude. Along with their parents, who have been technically classified as "enemy aliens," these Americans of Japanese ancestry com-

prise a good-sized town (about 18,500) of Oriental-faced inhabitants who speak English, sling American slang, jitterbug according to the most streamlined 1942 tradition, who prefer to sing "Deep in the Heart of Texas" to some minor-keyed Japanese folk-song, and who worry—down under the surface—as to their future status in this country that is also theirs.

The swank Santa Anita track with its "super" turquoise grandstand, from which cheering thousands once witnessed the lightning grace of "Seabiscuit" as well as crooner Bing Crosby's hopefuls, is now

THIS ISN'T JAPAN

surrounded by row upon row of tar-papered barracks; the stables, as well, have been converted into living quarters for the evacuees. The recreation halls under the grandstand, where movie stars and the smart set once mingled with track betters and horsing enthusiasts, now house hundreds of black-haired "slant-eyed" but not "sinister" young Japanese Americans. For here by the rows of windows marked "\$2.00," "\$5.00," "TO PLACE," "TO SHOW," "\$25.00," etc., are their schools and classes, both for children and adults.

Most of the music that pours from the radios down in the barracks and stables is "hot"—with the feverish, hectic tempo which is the delight of all good jivers. At the weekly jam sessions the boys come wearing their jerk hats and "zoot suits with the reat pleats," looking more like the Oriental version of Good Ole Siwash—vintage 1909—than the smiling, bespectacled, buck-toothed fascist of the cartoons. The girls are far from being stolid, plumpish, and peasant-like. They have plenty of oomph, and the Caucasian male visitors to the Assembly Center swear they have never seen a better-looking group of girls in all their lives.

When these American Nisei boys and girls walk down the street romantically holding each others' hands or chummily arm-in-arm, the older generation, the Issei, do not know whether to look discreetly away or to be nonchalant and simply look on. They are not yet accustomed to this typically Occidental phenomenon of frank display of affection between the sexes, something unheard of in Japan. They are embarrassed at the unembarrassedness of their Nisei children, but now they are gradually becoming accustomed to it like anything else.

When the first hot spell of the summer came on, for instance, many of the oldsters expressed consternation at pretty Nisei girls in ultra-modern playsuits with abbre-

viated shorts, "bra" tops, and bare midriffs. "Hadaka!" they exclaimed. "Nude!" But the girls continued to wear them. When young married couples first came into the Assembly camp and set up separate quarters of their own instead of living with their immediate families or with their in-laws, some Issei "tch-tched." But the Nisei insisted upon their American way. "This isn't Japan," they declared.

Two items, however, do add a touch of Japan to the Center—the parasols—though, to be sure, the parasols are mostly American; and the clattering of wooden Japanese shoes. These "getas" with their high cleats are very effective for avoiding contact with the shower-room floors and are much more practical on the dirt streets of Santa Anita than any sandal or bedroom slipper.

Otherwise the atmosphere is strictly "American."

Down the street comes a gang of small "geta"-shod boys. "Aw, you don't hafta get so sore about it!" one bawls out, and the other counters belligerently, "Who's sore?"

The taller one: "You are!"

"Oh, YEAH?"

"YEAH!"

"YEAH?"

"Y E A H ! !"

He is about a head shorter but he holds his own despite the fact that the tall guy has his chin thrust menacingly near his nose. Truce is declared and they walk on, while the tots sitting on homemade benches at the side of the streets, who have been watching this episode anticipating an interesting fight, resume their reading of Superman and Buck Rogers.

Perhaps it was their big brothers who scribbled "Restricted—\$45.00 per month" on the dusty windows of an unoccupied barrack unit nearby. "No Japs," they added with ironic humor. In the same key

COMMON GROUND

was the request at the weekly sing under the oak trees for the "Prisoner's Song." The same thin thread of irony—the gallantry of a generation trying to laugh off unpleasant circumstances—lies beneath the joking banter of the older adolescents who jibe the Nisei policemen by calling them "Gestapo"; who yell out "sabotage" and "Pearl Harbor" whenever someone "pulls a dirty trick" either in cards or practical joking.

Most of the time youth can "laugh it off." But sometimes there is bitterness. And often there is fear. I think of the Nisei boy who worries about the newspapers indiscriminately referring to us as "Japanese." "Whether we're citizens or not! That gets me down! They always refer to us as 'Japs' or 'American Japanese'—they're trying to make the public believe we're all 'Japs' instead of the Americans that we are."

Once, after a long hot afternoon, I heard an Issei father happily singing a Japanese song. Darkness had settled; the after-twilight coolness had brought everybody out of their over-warm quarters to enjoy the respite from the day's heat. Through the dusk I heard a very young voice protesting, "Oh, gee—Pa—not so loud! Everybody can hear you a mile off!"

It was my 12-year-old neighbor, Elsie. I tried to recall what sort of things used to embarrass me when I was her age—

Across the street I could see a door ajar revealing an American flag on the wall, just about the size of my own flag at "Valley Forge." I had mine sent in by a friend on the "outside" after I had heard a Nisei girl say, "You know, every unit in every barrack should have an American flag in it so that the Nisei and especially the very young children will always know this is America—so they will not forget what their flag looks like. Locked in here with nothing but Japanese and cut off from American contacts, we might lose something. We mustn't ever forget that we're Americans."

At Manzanar (the Owens Valley Relocation Center) a little Nisei boy interned there told his mother he was tired of "Japan" where there were nothing but Japanese. He wanted to go back to "America."

So do all of us.

Mary Oyama appeared in our Spring issue with a brief sketch, "After Pearl Harbor." She is now in the Santa Anita Assembly Center with her husband and two small children.

STATE LINE TO SKID ROW

WOODY GUTHRIE

THERE'S a whole big army of us rambling workers—call us migrants. Hundreds of thousands of people fighting against all kinds of odds to keep their little families sticking together; trickling along the highways and railroad tracks; living in dirty little shack towns, hunkered down along the malaria creeks, squatting in the wind of the dust-blown plains, and stranded like wild herds of cattle out across the blistered deserts.

A whole army of us. It's a big country. But we can take it. We can sing you songs so full of hard traveling and hard sweating and hard fighting you'll get big clear blisters in the palms of both your hands just listening to us. . . .

From Kingman, Arizona, to Barstow, California, is a long hot stretch. But it's not what you'd call empty. If you ease across over it in an airplane or a smooth-running V-8, you're apt to look out across this old rocky crackled country and not see very much. A little handful of people kneeling in the shade of a high, square road sign, maybe; another scattered bunch sticking around in the slick-off brown rocks or in the little snatch of shade under a desert cactus of some kind. And, if you're not pretty careful when you look, the people, the rocks, and hot weather will just sort of blur past your eye and all you'll see is a sign with a picture of a right pretty girl, grinning like an ape, with her head leaning back against a green cushion, and words painted up beside her saying: Next Time Try the Train.

I'd been walking the shoulder of this highway for four or five miles with my guitar slung across my back, and come up to a place where two families was setting around this sign. Quick as I got within earshot, one of the men, just about as dusty as I was, hollered out, "Hey, boy! Come over here and play that thing!" He was a sandy-headed man, with light skin and freckles popping out on him about the color of little pancakes. I got up in the shade of the sign board, and a lady with her back turned to me said, "Don't rush the boy. Maybe he's too hot and tired to play."

"Sing?" somebody asked me.

"Oh, make a racket," I said back to them.

"Yer jest a tellin' a big 'un," said another lady with an old gray, sweat-soaked, Western hat pulled down over her head. "I don't know, but I bet my last bottom dollar you can sing. I don't know how good—but you're from sommers down in my country, an' just about ever'body down in there can sing er play er do both. Most all of 'em had to sell their music boxes sommers along the road fer gas, fer eats, fer medicine; but since you hung onto your'n so far, all this ways, 'y granny, you ain'ta tellin' me you cain't sing . . . no, siree!"

I was sort of curious looking around. You could see all their bed clothes was faded and whipped pretty thin, patched a dozen times, and the old cloth rotting away from the new patch. They had a string of old skinned-up pots and pans,

COMMON GROUND

smeary black with soot. Their dresses was homemade, out of cotton, with hot skin shining through. One or two was on their knees to fix up a bite to eat; the others sat around on beer cases and got shooed off when the cooks needed to get something in them.

I set down cross-legged and run my thumb across my guitar strings.

"G string's a shade loose," the sandy-headed man told me.

"Beat the guitar, do you?" I looked over at him.

"Naw," he told me, "not no more." And he held up his left hand—three fingers gone, only a thumb and a front finger left, and the rest just a slick white-looking scar. "But I was a ear player to start with. An' I still yet got ears; still yet like to listen."

His wife or some lady goosed him in the ribs and told him, "If you're such a good listener, then you just rear back on that beer case an' listen. Go on, young man, sing." He quited down.

I got in D, played the tune, then dropped into chording and singing:

*She's my curly-headed baby;
Use to set on daddy's knee;
She's my curly-headed baby,
More than all this world to me.*

*I'm gonna tell you 'bout these women;
Yes, I'm gonna tell you what they'll
do;
Hang their head upon your shoulder,
Flirt around with another, too.*

*I'd ruther to be in some dark holler,
Where the sun refused to shine,
Than to see you with another
When you promised you'd be mine.*

"Well, well," a lady said, "outside of runnin' us women folks down, that's a awful nice piece."

"Mighty pretty. You'd ought to sing another'n now to run the women up. Here, eat this sow bosom and cold biscuit: it'll make you big an' fat."

I laid the sandwich down handy and said, "Okay, here's one that's about real—what I mean real—women":

*Well, John Henry hammered in the
mountain;
Handle of his hammer strikin' fire;
He worked so hard that he broke his
poor back,
And he laid down his hammer and he
died, Lord God,
Yes, he laid down his hammer and he
died.*

*Now John Henry had a little woman;
And her name was little Polly Ann.
When John Henry took sick and he
had to go to bed,
Polly Ann drove steel like a man,
Lord God,
Polly Ann drove steel like a man.*

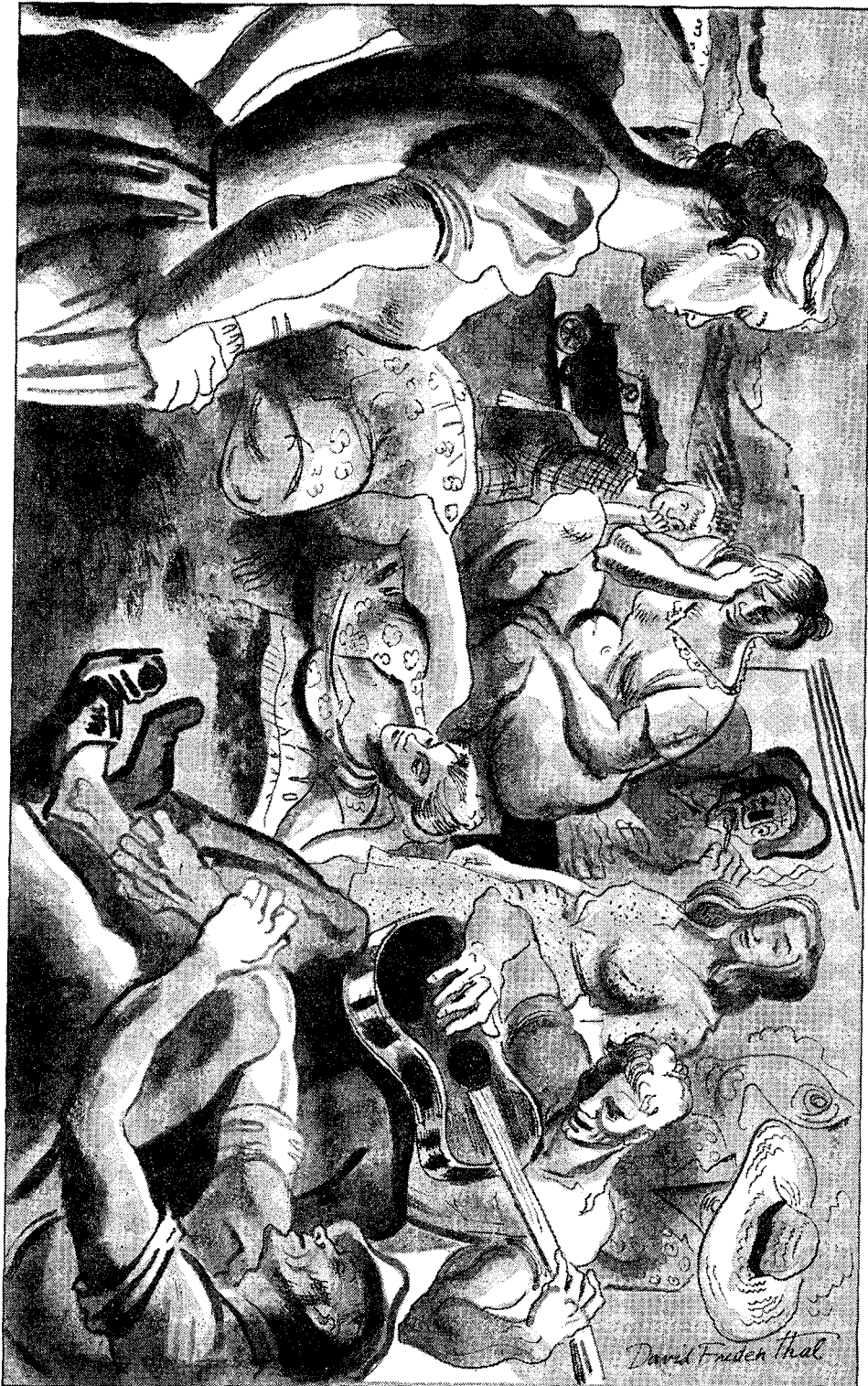
Everybody scraped around a little and said, "Man, take a woman like that an' you got a woman!" "Yep sir, 'y gad, git some work done if ever'body was that a way." "You mean, if you can find the work."

After another hunk of salty pork, dry bread, hot onion, and a few more songs, I decided to be easing on down the road. I thanked them and stood looking at their old seedy car. Two of the men folks walked over and asked, "Think she'll take us to where we're a goin'?"

I said back, "'Cordin' to where you're headed."

The oldest man sort of looked, first at me and then at the car, then down the bending road and said, "California's about all we know."

"Hear she's a hell of a hell of a big place," I said.



COMMON GROUND

"Yeah, got them there mean dep'ties."

"Well, you might make it, 'cause that's it you can see right in through yonder."

"Yeah, but that's the burnt-up part," he told me, "an' we's sort of hopin' to git to the green part."

I guess there was looks on all of our faces that asked questions.

As I started to mosey off, I thought about something I'd forgot to tell them, and I turned around and hollered, "Hey, folks, if you wanta keep your dishes an' skilletts an' stuff clean, just use this here hot sand like it was hot dish water. Family told me about it yesterday. Works pretty good. . . . Hope to run onto you again, somewhere in California."

"If you ever get hungry out around Stockton, just drop in on my cousin, Lem Hawks. He'll put you up, long's you knock him off plenty of them kind of songs—just mention my name!" one man yelled after me.

"Okay," I told him back over my shoulder. "I been hungry so long I'm used to it." . . .

I walked out onto the highway. I knew how their faces looked out of their eyes, knew without looking back anymore. I just kept plugging ahead.

It was hot, with a kind of heat you can't argue with—you feel so little out there on the face of that rambling desert you just walk along trying to invent something to think of to make you feel tough—like no matter how hot it gets, you can walk it; other folks have walked it, drug it in covered wagons, and are dragging out across it now, in jalopies, wrecked cars, and afoot, and they're not dying out there; they're laughing, talking, and singing songs out there; they're finding out how tough they are, how much heat, cold, how much starving they can stand and still fight back. There ain't no kind of an ism that can kill the people, or even hold

them down, as long as they know this.

I remember I picked up a last year's license tag and hitched it onto my belt where it would hang down behind and show all the drivers I had some kind of a right to be walking down that highway. Carloads of people drove by, slowed up a little and tooted their horns, laughed and cracked jokes, waved their hand at me. I sauntered along picking out little tunes on my guitar, dirty and hot, but having just a hell of a lot more fun than most of the folks that passed me up.

I'd sing to myself:

*Won't you roll on, buddy;
Don't you roll so slow.
Tell me, how can I roll,
When my wheel won't go?*

After walking three or four miles, I set myself down on a concrete culvert and watched the fast ones whiz by. The sun was so hot it made me sleepy. I got up and followed a little sandy creek bed about a half a mile, winding out into the desert.

Here's where I run onto a big, brand-new highway, crowded full of traffic, thick as it could stick, and nobody getting run over, nobody driving drunk and killing anybody. It was an ant highway, and from the looks of the crowds on the road, I figured there must be some sort of a big ant job, ant land rush, ant building boom, or new ant crop busted loose somewhere. So many ants trying to run the road they had to have traffic cops, road gangs fixing it up every few feet, foremen, straw bosses, and some ants around just to give out road maps and information as to where the work was. It was a 6 or 8 lane highway, and a lot safer than old 91.

Going out, every single ant stayed over onto his right-hand side, and every ant headed back toward the den was loaded down with a big fuzzy seed of some kind,

STATE LINE TO SKID ROW

his clinchers socked into the sides of that seed, holding ten or fifteen times his own weight way up in the air above his head, wiggling his feelers out in front, and running about 50 or 60 ant miles an hour. I wondered how long a haul they was making; so I tracked the road about a city block, wishing the people along the real highways could just get going and think up this much work to do together. The ant road was about as wide as your hand, and it ducked around under the hard sticker weeds and back into the shady spots close to the roots of the sticker bushes. No wrecks that I seen, but it made me hold my breath several times when a big fast one, redder than the rest, darker colored and huskier, would hit a clear stretch, throw her into overdrive and come wheeling down the road, catching a little traffic lull, throw out his feelers, tap his cushion air brakes a little, and ease his speed down to a slow idling gait, then catch his chance again and dart around the slow ones, in and out, just like a bad driver on a two-lane highway where careless drivers kill so many people.

I wondered where they was hauling all the groceries in from, and found the road ended at the foot of a desert shrub about as high as your head and ten foot around. I shook the limbs, and it was dry and brittle enough for the seeds to fall down all over everywhere; and you'd ought to seen the cops along the road signal one another to tell the main den to send out more haulers because there was more seeds on the ground.

I trailed the road back from the bush to the den. It was one of the busiest boom towns I'd ever hit: every single worker had a job; and it was a rare sight for several reasons—one to see cops that showed you where work was, but funnier to see bosses and politicians working. Maybe it was for ant defense—everything was wheeling and dealing; it was like a school-

house education. They'd dug five or six more extra holes around the main gate or city square, and—well, I got sleepy and rolled out on some hot sand, hanging my clothes up on the limbs of a old tree. Thought I'd soak up a couple or three inches of good, fresh Arizona sun. I drifted off to sleep thinking, maybe there's a Hitler ant den around here somewheres, hijacking other ants, making them work for low wages—

When I woke up, the sun was just barely out of sight over the west ridge. It was cold, and a chilly wind was drifting down the draw. When I moved my muscles, I had the sunburn all right, and ten years from now will still have traces of it. I walked over to the big ant highway, and it was empty, not a single ant on it, just as blank as the desert. The early night wind was whipping the loose sand and rotten twigs and leaves across it. The seeds under the bush were all gone, not a one left wasted. It was a lonesome feeling, almost made you think about the rambling crop hands; they'd worked, and moved on, and before morning their tracks would be whipped out by the wind and all covered over with rotten leaves and twigs.

Everybody gone to chase down some more work. . . .

This was the longest stretch I ever walked. The clear nights are the cold nights on the desert; there's no fog or low clouds to hold the heat down onto the earth. The moon was pale as a scared girl; and choppy hills, rims of the badland canyons, looked all sorts of funny shapes and colors. Cars passed, but not many, and nobody seemed to see my thumb in the dark. I didn't care much. Big trucks wobbled past, and I could see sleepy drivers, coffee heads, nodding under the steering wheels. Signs stuck on the windshield said: No Riders. I thought it might as well be: No Driver. I walked eight

COMMON GROUND

miles, glad to be there by myself, all by my lonesome, but sometimes a little shiv-ery thinking about the hungry cougars, mama mountain lions, wild dogs, mad dogs, bob cats, rattlesnakes, gila monsters, and other deadly varmints trying to make a honest living on the face of this bald spot. But then, the ants had showed me the desert's not crazy.

I was tired out, sore and blistered from sleeping in the sun, and crawled off to lay down at the side of the road and grab a little shuteye. But the ground was too cold and I was too hot; and snakes, tarantulas, lizards, children of the earth, are always out looking for a good warm bed-feller to roll up with if the price is right; and I just couldn't go off to sleep. So I got up and walked nine more miles, making seventeen for this stretch. Then I looked down the road and seen a little splash of neon light and figured I'd make it in the next ten or fifteen minutes. I walked a couple of more hours, and then I remembered: the law of distance, time, space, and gravity ain't been voted in as law on the desert yet.

A big truck plowed up behind me, slowed down to a snail crawl, and the pusher yelled, "Run! C'mon! Cain't stop! Pile in!" I wrestled my guitar up onto the high fender, clumb over a spare tire as big as a Ferris wheel, and fell into the cab with my feet slung out across a tool box that was more than a load for most trucks. There in the dark the little lights on the dashboard looked like gauges on a defense factory; the gear shift levers and brake controls like young clumps of trees jumping up. The driver had on an all-leather helmet, and wool-lined, fur-trimmed goggles like a bomber pilot, and a heavy oily coat, and clumsy driving gloves. He pulled gears with three hands, and got me to help him for the first three miles.

I could see his mouth fly open and talk,

but I couldn't make out what he said, so I just wiggled my mouth back at him, and he started smiling and looking satisfied. When a truck driver like this looks sideways at you and frowns his face all up, that means pull out your guitar and sing him a song. You can yell your guts out, but all you'll hear will be the groan of that big Diesel engine. He let the clutch in and started coasting down a little flat slope, and it got quieter, and he said, "Gotta let you out about a mile this side of them lights yonder! 'Fraid of spotters! Company snitches! Keep on singing!" Then, when he let me out, he said, "Well, here you are. Ain't but a step down to that java joint. Thanks for the singing. Couldn't hear a damn word of it, but you looked like you was trying. Just wanted to see you try! I like to keep fellers at work!"

I stopped in at the feedmill, and the heat felt so good I decided to hang out there all night. People dropped in all along, and I started to play and sing to pick up a few nickels to eat on, but the boss lady with a tough brown skin hushed me up every time: "No noise tonight. Got a man that's gotta work; gotta get his sleep in." Five or six sets of local people, miners, ranchers, little farmers, young cowboys with their girls, dropped in and drank lots of hot coffee, pushed down apple pie, burgers, and cold beer; and two or three started to hand me a nickel or a dime to sing for them. But the lady with the tough brown skin would sort of look over at us just such a way as to keep me from making the nickel, without hurting the customer's feelings.

But just after sun-up, the lady and me heard a husky alarm clock ringing in the back room of the place, and she slid a big stack of wheats, two thick hunks of home-made sausage, and a cup of coffee down the counter, and says, "Man's up. You'll need this under your hide to do much

STATE LINE TO SKID ROW

walking today. . . . When you get it down,
you can play and sing me your best song."

I sung her one of my best:

Well, I'll pawn you my wagon,
And I'll pawn you my team;
I'll pawn you my big diamond ring.
If that train runs right,
See my woman Saturday night;
'Cause I'm 900 miles from my
home!
. . . . and I hate to hear that lone-
some whistle blow!

Oh, that train that I ride on,
She's a hundred coaches long;
And her engine is like a cannon ball!
If that train's on time,
I'll see that little woman of mine;
'Cause I'm 900 miles from my
home!
. . . . you can hear that whistle
blow a hundred miles!

Yes, I'm walking down this track,
I got tears in my eyes,
Trying to read a letter from my
home;
I'm a stranger where I roam;
Not a soul knows my name;
And I'm tired of living this a way!
. . . . there's that long, lonesome
train whistlin' down!

The lady listened with her elbow resting on the counter and her hand on her cheek. We both nodded, said some little something about thank you, so long; and when I got out along the edge of the road, I heard her man saying, "Singin' ain't bad at all to get up on of a morning."

The sun got warmer, and I was a couple of miles around the bend, walking along looking at the wild canyons, and sort of wondering how many families of folks was caught and stranded in this place. I soaked in the good morning air, as there

was an oversupply of it, and the sun was hitting me warm across the back. I kicked at loose rocks, thumped chords on my rattle box; and all at once an old model touring car, 19 Zero model, big and ugly, with an old flapping canvas top, three men in the front seat, picked me up.



When they said they was headed across as far as Barstow, I slunk down into the back seat and felt good all over. Told jokes. Stories. Tall tales.

They was from somewhere, going somewhere else. So was I. That was enough to know about each other.

From Barstow to San Bernardino to Los Angeles to everywhere, I set my hat on the back of my head and strolled from town to town with my guitar slung over my shoulder. I sung along a lot of bow-eries, back streets, and Skid Rows. I sung

COMMON GROUND

on Reno Avenue in Oklahoma City, and Community Camp and Hooversville, on the flea-bit rim of the City's garbage dump; in the city jail in Denver, in Raton and Dodge City; the jury table in Santa Fe, lower Pike Street in Seattle and Superior Street in Duluth; the saloons in Tia Juana, Juarez, Ensenada, and Baja California, where there are just about two musicians for every tourist and each Mexican plays a whole tree-full of instruments. I played, too, in the little camps called "Little Mexicos" on the dirty edge of California's pretty green places, where the Mexicans treated me like I was a member of the family.

I sung long tales and ballads for the railroad gangs on the Texas plains, the road workers along the border, the truck patchers in Colorado, New Mexico, and across Arizona; in the orchards of hungry people and rotten, wasted crops in California. In Portland I sung for a lot of ship scalers, inland boatmen, and timber workers; and in Reno for some playfolks and fading romances, and made better tips but landed in the city can for vagrancy. I hit Chicago on a wild cattle train from Minneapolis and sung in a dozen saloons along the Skid across the street from the big packing-houses, with the Swedes, the Slavs, Russians, Norwegians, Irish, Negroes. It looked like everybody leaned on everybody's shoulder, and the songs and tunes didn't have any race or color much, because what's right for a man anywhere is right for you wherever you are. Buffalo, Erie, around the edge of the Great Lakes, across over to Milwaukee, I found the same thing. Factory workers in New York and munition makers in Hartford, Connecticut, said, "Songs that say what's wrong say what's right; and songs that tell you how to fix what's wrong, that's what we all say."

Around the East Coast, I sung on the gravel barges, tug boats, anchor bars, and

hotel lobbies, and along the New York Bowery, watching cops chase the bay-rum drinkers. I curved along the Gulf of Mexico and sung with the tars, oilers, tanker men in Port Arthur; grease men and oil workers in Texas City; and the marijuana smokers in the floptown in Houston. I sung in the coal towns in Virginia and in Kentucky's tobacco patches, the iron towns in Pennsylvania, including the crowbar hotel in Mifflintown; from the freight yards in Chicago to the black-rust wheat fields in North and South Dakota. In the pool halls and clip joints in Phoenix, Siloam Springs and Gravette, Arkansaw; in the Street of the Walking Death, the silicosis death that blows off the high piles of shale and slag from the lead and zinc mines in the tri-state country—the corner of Oklahoma, Arkansaw, and Missouri. . . .

Yes, there's a whole big army of us rambling workers, call us migrants, out milling around, doing a lot of nothing much. But farmers everywhere are crying for work hands, and we got the hands and are crying to do the work. We'll go anywhere. We been everywhere. You'll see us tonight, and we'll be 300 miles before the morning gets bright. Show us the work; we'll show you how to get it done.

Show us your wasted cherry crops in Washington; show us your peaches falling on the ground in California; just trot us out an oil field that needs overhauling, a string of 200-pound boilers to make fire; lope a railroad out across here anywhere and we'll drive ten jillion iron spikes in it running sixty miles an hour. Show us where you got your work hid out; bring your jobs out in the open: it's legal, you don't have to bootleg work. Where's them big bridges you want slung across your mean rivers? That rva and Grand Coulee Dam and the Boulder are pretty fair starters, but now you just throw this rock

STATE LINE TO SKID ROW

across the river here to show us where you want some bigger dams built.

Take us down into your deep lead, zinc, coal, copper mines, aluminum deposits; give us the general idea of where you want a tunnel drove; point out across the forty-eight states where the roads are too little and the cars are too big and folks go too fast and get killed; mark a line here in the mud and give us a handful of dredges, mud shovels, and just plain old hand shovels, and get out of the way for us to build a canal. Throw us your red hot rivets; we was the champ workers where we come from. Who wants me to sling an airplane together? How about a whole flock of bombers to fly around over your ships on the ocean?

I come to work. I'm a hard man from a hard place, and I come down a hard road. I know all of the words there is, cuss words to work with, all kinds of words to sing with, and words to talk to my wife in the dark with.

Yes, guess I'm what you'd call a migrant worker. Guess you had to think up some kind of a name for me. I travel, yes, if that's what you mean in your red-tape and your scary offices; but you can just call me any old word you want to. You just set and call off a whole book full of names, but let me be out on my job while you're doing the calling. That a way, we can save time and money and get more work turned out.

I ain't nothing much but a guy walking along. You can't hardly pick me out in a big crowd, I look so much like everybody else. Streets. Parks. Big places. I travel. Hell, yes, I travel. Ain't you glad I travel and work? If I was to stop, you'd have to up and leave your job and start traveling, because there's a hell of a lot of traveling that's got to be done. Oil booms, timber booms, land booms, housing booms, gold booms, coal, lead, zinc, steel, iron, canal booms; big dam jobs,

and damn big jobs; fruit, vegetables, cotton, cattle, logs, hogs, bulls, bears, buffaloes, tanker ships, whalers, freighters to ride herd on.

I ain't got nothing against you for living in your pretty house, just so long as you don't hire your cops or thugs to come along and beat me up. You and me can get along. We got to get along. You'd like me if I knew you better. You just ain't got no plan fixed up to keep me at work, and you can't figure out what makes me a tramp.

Tramp, that's a good name. Sorta come to like it. Means you travel and go places. Hell, don't a railroad engineer travel? Don't 10 million folks float around in them boats and travel? Don't the sun, moon, and seeds travel? Ain't traveling good? Ain't traveling honest? I seen salesmen and drummers travel; soldiers, sailors, street cars travel; when you work in your office you travel. If you do your own work around your house, you travel; birds, snakes, lizards, geese, and fish travel. Coffee travels, and tea. Rubber bounces across the ocean and rolls all over the roads. Tanks travel. Bombers and bombs travel. Hand grenades don't do much sleeping. Bullets don't mope along. Poison gas goes a long ways to kill people you're saving pictures of. MacArthur is traveling. The Normandie traveled, and she'll travel again.

*I been havin' some hard travelin',
I thought you knowed.
I been havin' some hard travelin'
Way down the road.
I been havin' some hard gravellin',
Hard ramblin', hard gamblin',
I been havin' some hard travelin',
Lord.*

*I been ridin' them fast rattlers,
I thought you knowed.
I been a ridin' them flat wheelers*

COMMON GROUND

Way down the road.
I been ridin' them blind passengers,
Dead enders, kickin' up cinders,
I been havin' some hard travelin',
Lord.

I been a layin' in a hard rock jail,
I thought you knowed.
I been a layin' out ninety days,
Way down the road.
Mean old judge he says to me,
Ninety days for vagrancy,
I been havin' some hard travelin',
Lord.

I been hittin' some hard rock minin',
I thought you knowed.
I been leanin' on a pressure drill
Way down the road.
Hammer flyin', air hose suckin'
Six foot of mud an' I sure been a
muckin',
I been havin' some hard travelin',
Lord.

I been hittin' some hard harvestin',
I thought you knowed.
North Dakota to the Rio Grande,
Way down the road.
Pickin' them crops, stackin' that hay,
Tryin' to make about a dollar a day,
I been havin' some hard travelin',
Lord.

I been a workin' your Pittsburgh
steel,
I thought you knowed.
I been dumpin' your red-hot slag
Way down the road.
I been a blastin', I been a firin',
I been a pourin' red hot iron,
I been havin' some hard travelin',
Lord. . . .

I'm what you call not a shade-tree
tester, not a mattress presser. I'm a feller
made out of something pretty damn
rough and tough, and Hitler's a shade
sorry I am so tough. I'm a migratory
worker, and I been all around these forty-
eight states. I saw you work, saw you eat
the stuff I harvested. Did you see me in
your crops? I saw you, saw your house
there, saw your mail box the way you
got it fixed up.

We're gonna win out. We talk the
same lingo.

With the appearance of "Ear Players"
in the Spring issue of this magazine,
Woody Guthrie excited the immediate
interest of several publishers. He is now
finishing work on a volume tentatively
called Boom-Chasers, to be published by
Dutton and to include this piece as well
as the earlier one.

The illustrator is David Fredenthal.

ON THE ITALIAN AMERICANS

MAX ASCOLI

No matter how isolationist the government of the United States has been at any time, the various peoples that make America have never felt indifferent regarding the major events taking place in their countries of origin. This applies to the descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers as well as to the Italians who arrived steerage during the last five or six decades. Certainly events in Italy—the rise and fall of the fascist state, the conquest of Ethiopia, the invasion of Greece, the defeat of the fascist armies—have deeply affected the morale of Italian Americans and their status in the American community. Similarly the success or the plight of men of Italian descent in America has always had far-reaching influence on the Italians in the home country. One needs only to think of how shocked they were by the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti, and of the popularity, second only to that of Roosevelt, that Fiorello LaGuardia enjoys all over Italy.

Now the war situation has made infinitely closer the inter-relation between Italian Americans and Italians in Italy. The participation of Italian Americans in the war effort will and must have a decisive influence on the Italian revolt against fascism. This does not mean Italian Americans are expected to have any share in the future government of Italy, but it does mean that the American loyalty of men of Italian descent may powerfully contribute to the overthrow of fascism in Italy and to the final victory of the United States in this war.

The same applies, I think, to every American group whose country of origin is under Nazi domination. Indeed the case of the Italian Americans must be considered as a particularly illuminating instance of a much larger problem, a testing ground for the development of far-reaching policies. The solidarity among men of the same culture and race may be perhaps the best guarantee against the curse of nationalism; the cultural international of the Italians, of the French, or of the Germans may develop into the most active counterpoison against Italian, French, and German nationalism. The confluence of all these cultural internationals is in America. America can offer the concrete evidence that they are reciprocally harmonious and compatible, and this is why America today can decide the destiny of the old countries.

When the war broke out, large sections of the Italian American group were still not thoroughly absorbed into American society. In the abnormal conditions that war creates, the process of assimilation may be arrested and the bulk of the Italian Americans, which means five to seven million people, hardened into an alien body or into a national minority. If we realize the gravity of the danger and deal with it vigorously, we can render a great service to both the United States and Italy.

As is well known, immigration of Italians to the United States started very late, toward the end of the 19th century, in the era when the American frontiers had been closed. They came from the poorest re-

gions of Italy, predominantly from the south, and of a large mass of them it can be said that they became Americans before ever having been Italians. They had, and they still have, a very strong attachment for the native village, an attachment that can reach as far as the province or the region. But they still are essentially Sicilians or Neapolitans or Pugliesi. They were unified into a "national" block by the other Americans with whom they came to live and who called all of them Italians—or rather "Wops."

There is no reason to be surprised if large sections of Italian Americans felt the spell of Mussolini's myth. Mussolini appealed to them as the "Wop" who was making the front page. As a matter of fact, those of them who could read were proud to see how the most prominent Americans—bankers, university presidents, writers—were paying tribute to him and extolling fascist Italy as an example to the world. Yet it would be a gross exaggeration to say that the large majority of the Italian Americans were for Mussolini. Their problem was, and still is, that of winning social and economic equality in the American community. They felt that the feats of fascist Italy could make them more respected in America. And, of course, fascist propaganda played abundantly on their resentment, on their feeling of inferiority, and on their hunger for recognition.

As with other immigrant groups, the Italian Americans were given the vote and were taken into consideration in electoral campaigns when the politicians were after the "Italian vote." American politicians were never too fastidious, particularly in the great metropolitan centers, about getting the support of fascist elements working under the inspiration of the fascist consulates. Even today in New York City, the Italian American who most successfully pretends to deliver the Italian vote is a man who is still a power in Tammany

Hall and who, until a few months ago, had the very center of fascist propaganda in the newspaper he owns.

Italian Americans have always been one of the most unorganized groups. They have practically no hospitals, no dispensaries, few or no autonomous social service organizations. Politics is the career that offers the greatest chance of success to the most ambitious among their young men. This means they must serve their apprenticeship in political or labor machines ruled by men of immigrant groups that arrived earlier and have more political skill, and who have had more regard for vote-getting than for the integration of new voters in American society.

So the large mass of the Italian Americans, not organized under responsible social and political leadership, arrived late, and half-assimilated, remains in a sort of marginal zone. Uprooted from Italy they are not yet, or not deeply enough, rooted in America. What is their situation now, in this war that incidentally has outlawed Mussolini's myth and has branded Italy as an enemy nation?

When the second world war started, Italian Americans were divided into three groups: a small articulate well-financed minority of fascists, a small articulate ragged minority of anti-fascists, and a large mass in the middle of men and women sentimentally and ineffectually pro-fascist. At the outbreak of hostilities the pro-fascist elements were, of course, furiously anti-British and anti-French. Needless to say, they were against American intervention.

The articulate anti-fascists are still a minority whose propaganda is percolating only slowly among Italian Americans. Since the war broke out, they have succeeded in reaching some unity and organization in the Mazzini Society, though for twenty years they have been repeating that

ON THE ITALIAN AMERICANS

the fascist regime was fatal to Italy and incompatible with the principles for which America stands. Now they have been proven right, and the Mazzini Society, founded and led mainly by recent political immigrants, has found its chance of growth in the increasing awareness of the fact that there is no compromise possible between fascism and America. Yet many Italian American politicians who rode to positions of power with the support of fascist consulates or of fascist institutions find it difficult to forgive the leaders of the Mazzini Society for having been so right. In the contribution of the Italian Americans to the national war effort, there should be no room, they insist, for that anti-Mussolini stuff.

All Italian American daily papers were pro-fascist as long as there was a chance for American isolation; but Pearl Harbor made them turn to a tongue-in-the-cheek one-hundred-per-cent Americanism. Italian-language radio stations followed suit. In this most difficult situation, the public authorities have been swinging between two extreme tendencies. The first is to consider literally the Italian residents in this country "enemy aliens," and the Italian Americans as somehow probationary citizens. The second is to take every declaration of loyalty at face value; to assume that every fascist agent or sympathizer was reborn with a clean heart on December 7th. When the old anti-fascists are reluctant to march along with former fascists in the parade of one-hundred-per-cent Americanism, they are sometimes made to understand they ought to drop their moralistic scruples if they do not want to appear as saboteurs of national unity.

The first tendency assumes the Italians are uncongenial to American democracy, and are potential enemies; the second that they are thoroughly assimilated and entirely sold on the war effort. Both ten-

dencies are alike in failing to suggest a policy for increasing the number of the good and disarming the bad.

The first step, I think, in dealing with this matter is to recognize the facts. There is here a large group of American citizens, and of Italians living in America, not thoroughly assimilated, who have not yet had the chance of grasping fully the meaning of America. We cannot rely too blindly on the automatic melting of all the immigrant groups in our melting pot. Possibly the system of the wholesale melting is wasteful and hazardous. I think we can acknowledge the existence of racial and national groups in the United States without falling into racialism or nationalism. The tendency to say that there is not an Italian, or a German, or a Polish, or a Jewish problem is exactly the same as that of those American conservatives who used to deny the existence of a class conflict in America and were alarmed at the Wagner Act. But the Wagner Act has not exactly sharpened the class conflict. The same, I think, may be the case with future acts and measures that may be inspired by a frank and open acknowledgment of racial and national problems in the United States.

Among measures that can be suggested, one is of a fundamental character and is adaptable in general outline for use with other unassimilated immigrant groups.

Somewhere in one of the several agencies working in the field of civilian morale there should be an advisory board on Italian American affairs. The members should not necessarily all be Italian Americans. There are in the United States a large number of cultured men and women of other stocks who have lived in Italy, know the language, and are in sympathy with the Italian people. But all—whether Italian Americans or Americans of other stocks—should be men and women whose

COMMON GROUND

devotion to the institution of freedom and love for American ideals is not an upshot of Pearl Harbor. In this connection I think it would be extremely dangerous to assume that all present office holders among the Italian Americans could automatically be entrusted with responsibility on such a board as representative of their group. A comparatively large number of them have gone so far in playing ball with fascist organizations as to make themselves unfit to hold positions of public trust.

The main function of such an advisory board should be to explain America and the advantages of American life to Americans of Italian descent. It should bring America within reach of the sentiments, of the feelings, and of the interests of the Italian Americans. It should foster local initiative and local leadership, trying to stimulate the Italian Americans to give their share to the war effort of the whole American people. Its aim would be to have the Italian Americans doing what other Americans do or are supposed to do, enjoying the advantages that other Americans enjoy, or are supposed to enjoy. Every war situation makes for large dislocation of groups in the community. Those that are not organized or assisted are left behind and become embittered.

Through the instruments of expression and communication, it is possible to appeal to their imagination and to their cultural traditions. In the press and over the radio, features should be offered exalting the great Italians of the past, particularly of the Risorgimento—in the great struggle for freedom of the Italian people in the 19th century. Italian Americans should become thoroughly familiar with the epic of Garibaldi, the man who, with a thousand followers, conquered a kingdom, made it a part of the new Italian state, and went back home as poor as he had been all his life. Those who have been so thoroughly indoctrinated with the re-

cent epic of Mussolini can be awakened to the realization that the best of their Italian past is absolutely identical with the best of the American tradition. It is doubtful that the cold Mount Vernon or textbook Washington can ever directly appeal to their Latin imagination, but we can explain Washington by way of Garibaldi. The same work of re-education and persuasion can be done in schools where the Italian language is taught. So far, most of the textbooks have been written by more or less careful or disguised fascists. There should be no difficulty, with so many Italian anti-fascist intellectuals and scholars at present in this country, in finding writers for pro-democratic textbooks suitable to the American form of government and the fight in which we are engaged. There are no reasons why the teaching of the Italian language should be discouraged, provided that all children of Italian parents born in America use English as their mother tongue. The aim should be not to force Italian Americans to compulsory sudden Americanization, but rather to have them develop an American interpretation of their Italian heritage.

The proposed council on Italian American affairs, to be established in Washington with branches in all the main sections of the country where there are large Italian groups, should co-ordinate with government authorities. It would have no administrative functions of its own, but rather a public relations sort of activity. So, for instance, it should stimulate public relief agencies to hire personnel trained to work in Italian American surroundings; it should advise radio stations on their Italian-language programs and help them find technical or artistic personnel; it should act as counsel to Italian American individuals or groups who advance complaints of discrimination. Such functions of public relations and protection in the old days used to be taken care of by party machines.

ON THE ITALIAN AMERICANS

Now during the war emergency they come under the Federal government.

All this requires organization and adequate means. Means are going to become available in the various offices that take care of public assistance or of civilian morale. What is asked here is that adequate means may be used to make the American citizens of Italian descent grasp the reality of what America is and what democracy is. It would be incorrect to say Italian Americans are not good Americans or good democrats. But they are in danger and confusion. Danger can be eliminated and confusion dispelled if a clear and friendly policy is followed, based on a program of education and assistance rather than of wholesale repression or wholesale indulgence.

Gradually Italian Americans can be led to realize that America's victory in the war will mean the liberation of Italy. They can be educated to consider themselves as the trustees of a better Italy. By being shown what harm fascism has done to the country of their origin, they can be made into convinced opponents of any fascist

tendency here. There can be no problem of divided allegiance when the goal is identical.

The greater the conscious and deliberate participation of every national group in the war effort, the nearer will be the moment of liberation of Europe; the surer will be the guarantee of victory. Which means that the freedom of the European nations is a necessary condition for the complete unity of the American people. Or, to put it differently, that the liberation of Europe begins at home and that the first step toward the establishment of a new front in Europe is to take care of the European national groups in our country.

Formerly on the faculties of several Italian universities, Dr. Max Ascoli came to the United States in 1931 and joined the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research in New York City, becoming Dean in 1939. Now on leave of absence, he is working with the office of the Co-ordinator of Inter-American Affairs.

MY UNCLE POLDÉ

FRANK MLAKAR

I REMEMBER that I was the first to see him the night he came. He stood there quietly just inside the door, waiting for someone to notice him. Relatives, friends from all over Cleveland crowded our small house for it was the celebration of my father's name day. *Sveti Janez*—St. John's Day! The table was piled high with roast fowl, coils of Slovenian sausage, hams, fruit, mounds of *potitsa* and other pastries; and down the middle of the table marched a row of jugs filled with delicious home-made wine.

My father bustled from this group to that, greeting old friends, pressing them with more to eat. But already the guests were beginning to sit back from the table and pat their stomachs, laughing and giggling in spite of themselves as they gossiped about each other's illnesses and calamities.

My mother darted in and out of the room; she was everywhere with more food, more drink, laughing and coaxing. She ran over to me. "Do you like it?" she whispered gayly, with a little mock-bow.

When she lifted her head a cry broke from her. Her eyes were fixed on the tall thin man who stood in the doorway. I saw she was trembling.

My mother cried out, "Poldé!"

The man gave a start, turned himself toward her. He was weeping as she embraced him.

The room quieted. My mother at last lifted her head to look up at the man, smiled tearfully, and taking him by the arm led him to my father.

"Janez," she said, "this is my brother Poldé!"

My father gave a cry of gladness. He turned to the guests. "Now we really have something to celebrate!" he shouted. "This is Anitsa's brother from the old country." He dragged his new-found brother-in-law to my brother and me. Tony, three years older than I, had his arm round my shoulder. My father started the introductions before he reached us. "Here are my boys, Poldé. Tony is the big one, and this is Paul, who is sixteen."

Uncle Poldé embraced us, murmured a greeting and turned his face back to my father, who led him to the big table.

The guests immediately crowded round them, plying Uncle Poldé with questions about himself, the old country, their mutual friends. "When did you leave?" "How are things in Mala Vas?" "How are the Podpadecs who ran the mill? Where are the . . ."

Uncle Poldé twisted his big hands with embarrassment, evaded several of these questions, and then said abruptly, "I've been living in Trieste the past few years."

But Funtek the grocer was not to be put off in this way.

"Poldé," he persisted, "do you remember? We were boys together—"

Uncle Poldé's eyes dropped to the floor.

"Yes!" cried Funtek. "Why, it must be twenty years—" His wife broke in, grabbing him by the arm. "There'll be time enough for that later," she said. "Let Poldé alone," and when he protested, she spun him round and took him away.

MY UNCLE POLDÉ

Uncle Poldé smiled weakly, sat down to the table. After a moment the distressed look passed from my mother's face, too; she set a few dishes before him and he began to eat.

Soon there was a general burst of talk again. But the jollity seemed a bit different now. Puzzled looks were thrown at Uncle Poldé. Funtek still grumbled to himself. This was indeed a strange immigrant! Most of them were glad to see familiar faces again after the long trip to America; they did not behave like this! I could feel my mother's own bafflement.

As though aware of the impression he had made, and regretting it, Uncle Poldé commenced to talk loudly to my father. "So this is America?" he exclaimed. "Do you always eat so well?"

someone pressed him with a reference to their old days in Slovenia, he pleaded weariness. "I don't see why you have to be so quiet," said Funtek, disgruntled.

Only my father seemed really undisturbed by Uncle Poldé's behavior. He was tired by the excitement of the evening and said quite matter-of-factly when the guests had gone, "It was a good party. Now let's go to bed. Tony and I start work at six."

In the morning, when I left for school, Uncle Poldé was still sleeping.

We did not learn any more about him in the next few days. He did not tell my mother where he had been the many years she had not heard from him, nor why he had come to America. She continued to regard him with a wondering look.

He did not talk much. At noon when I



My father waved a deprecating hand and said pompously, "This is an occasion, but I can't say we ever starve."

At midnight the guests began to leave. Many of them came to Uncle Poldé once more for a final word. He appeared to have lost some of his tenseness, but when

came home for lunch I would find him seated at the table, chin cupped in his bony hands. Sometimes, however, he would begin abruptly to tell about something he had seen that day. He talked and talked then. "A strange place, this America," he said once, shaking his head.

"People here walk about with the look of nobility on their faces, more sure of themselves than the counts and princes back home in Slovenia. Where do they get this look? Even the penniless seem to act as if they'd not be at all surprised to meet a miracle face to face." This look that he thought he detected on the faces of Americans appeared to interest Uncle Poldé a great deal. In fact, he said, some of the members of the Slovenian colony in Cleveland were different people now; he did not recognize them. "In the old country they bowed their backs, resigned to their old place in the world. Here in America they step out like new men." He waited a moment, then added, "Does this happen to everybody in America?"

He spent most of his time wandering about the city. At night he came home tired, but trembling with excitement, his face alight, burning with anticipation. By morning all this seemed to have burned itself out, as though it were too much for him to hold. He came downstairs with a dead look on him, his eyes dull as ashes.

Uncle Poldé said nothing about getting a job. My father suggested to him that Tony might be able to help him find one at the factory where he worked. Uncle Poldé said, "Yes," quietly, and went up to the little attic room we had prepared for him.

When Tony came home one day and told him he could start work the following morning, Uncle Poldé nodded his head, and went upstairs to sort out the proper clothes.

His room in the attic was small. The roof with its ribs of uncovered rafters sloped steeply and he could stand erect only in the middle of the floor. But this did not seem to bother him. He was in the habit of walking around with his head dropped on his chest. There was little furniture in the place: a chair, a shaky

chest of drawers, the wicker basket he had brought with him from the old country, a cot pushed under the rafters. But he never grumbled.

One night, a couple of months after his arrival, my mother sent me up to see him. I climbed the tight little stairway. Approaching the door, I heard a muffled crying.

"Uncle Poldé!" I shouted.

After a moment he bade me come in. He was lying on his side on the narrow cot, his bony knees drawn up to his chin.

"Come in, Pavlek," he said.

"Call me Paul," I said. "My name is Paul."

"In Slovenian it's Pavlek," he insisted.

"Only hunkies say Pavlek!"

"You're not a hunky, whatever that may be," he insisted. "You're a Slovenian."

"I'm not!" I shouted. "I'm an American!"

He sat up, his head almost hitting a rafter. "Tell me, Pavlek," he said with intense interest, "what is this thing—to be an American?" The muscles over his face flickered with eagerness.

"You've got to be born here," I said.

"No, no," he protested. "It's something else. You can feel it, almost hold it in your hands sometimes."

"Or else you have to be made a citizen, like my father," I said.

Uncle Poldé was not satisfied.

"What were you crying about?" I said abruptly.

"Crying? I was crying, Pavlek?"

"I heard you," I said.

He looked at me. "But I was laughing!" he cried. "I was thinking to myself how ridiculous it is a peasant like me should be making so much money in America."

I left him then.

His days so far as we knew were all the same. Mornings, shod in his clumsy thick shoes he clumped out of the house, down

the street to the stamping factory where for nine hours each day he swept the steel chips from under machines, emptied the waste barrels.

When he had been doing this a few months, my father said to him, "Poldé, it's time you asked for a better job." Poldé nodded understandingly. "I will," he promised. After some days, however, he confessed that he could not bring himself to do it. My father gave an angry exclamation. "Poldé, in America it's taken for granted you want to get ahead!" When Uncle Poldé sighed that he just couldn't do it, not yet, my father grunted in disgust and left him.

Nor could any of us understand just why things as simple as this bothered him. In fact, we could not understand him at all. We would have liked him to find other lodgings. "Joy sits as well on that man's face as a saddle on the back of a mule," complained my father. But Uncle Poldé gave no signs of leaving, although he once asked my mother if he could not stay with us at least till he began to feel a bit more at home in the city.

My mother, her face red with embarrassment, complied.

Now and then Uncle Poldé mingled with other people, his face tightening with eagerness when someone spoke to him and encouraged his company. On Saturday nights, like most bachelors in the Slovenian colony, he went to the dances held in the National Home by the various lodges, dramatic and singing societies. My mother, who was a member of several such groups, also went frequently.

Here, while gyrating furiously in a polka, his thin face never lost its sad dignity. It wasn't long before the American-born kids in the hall got nerve enough to mimic him, prancing madly up and down the floor, holding their faces in a desperately calm look. Now and then one of them exploded with laughter. Scolded

only mildly by their amused parents, they became bolder and slid across the floor under his nose, their arms pumping up and down, their feet churning in comically long steps.

Uncle Poldé finished the dance, took the giggling girl to her parents, trudged to my mother and said, "I'm going home, Anitsa." There were some then who grinned broadly as he left, but as many turned their faces away.

As time passed, now and again I began to find myself going up to his room, with no purpose in mind but somehow attracted to him. "*Kai chesh?*" he would ask—"What do you want?"—the bony outlines of his face softening with kindness and then, unexpectedly, lighting up with curiosity, for he was not used to having people seek him out. I could not tell him why I had come.

"You're a strange little one, Pavlek. So quiet, always listening, peering into books. You know already, don't you, what it is to be sad and lonely." It was late; he was tired from a long walk, but his eyes were alive and warm.

He sighed. "And I'm no better."

In a dim way I knew how he felt.

"When I was a little boy I was even more lonely. I was a *yetskatch*—a stutterer. Talking to the cattle I grazed, I could speak well. But most of the time I couldn't get a word out, even to ask my mother for bread. At night, Father insisted each member of the family take his turn saying the vesper prayer. When it came to me, I pleaded with God. 'Please God,' I cried, 'I am saying Thy Name. Please don't let me stutter on Thy Name!' As I started to pray my brother and sisters began to laugh and whisper 'G-G-God' among themselves. That was the way I said it in my praying. Then, when I got the Amen out, Father cuffed me till my ears rang to beat this perverseness out

of me. I would run to the barn to hide myself."

"But you don't stutter now," I said.

"No," he said. Then he was quiet.

"No, not now." He looked into my face. And for almost the first time I looked directly into his eyes.

"It was not long before I learned that God had put me on earth for a purpose. He shared me with the peasants. I was not a humpback nor a dwarf, but I was to be laughed at. Because I could not talk. . . .

"As I grew older and more shy, my stuttering got worse. Sometimes I could not talk at all. And then one day when a gang of schoolboys laughed at me, unaccountably I began to laugh with them. Inwardly for the moment I seemed to be quite calm. I felt lifted outside myself. There I stood, apart from the yelling boys, watching myself; Poldek Struna. I could see him—

"A comical figure indeed—his poor jaw bouncing up and down, with not a word coming out of him. Then this Poldek I watched laughed harder and harder. The boys began to gaze at him stupidly. Big tears rolled down his cheeks. Now I knew why God laughed, why people laughed. The stutterer! Looking so miserable, working so hard at something even a child could do; grinding his jaws, pursing his lips, bobbing his head—all to force out a few words. The Poldek I was watching laughed till he began to choke. And then he said, 'Oh, but it is funny!'

"And he spoke plainly.

"For a moment the boys and I, too, were struck dumb with amazement. Then I shrieked with the biggest laughter of them all. I knew of a sudden I would never stutter again. This was the secret God had kept from me: I had been put on earth to be laughed at, to be enjoyed.

"But I did not want to be laughed at for stuttering.

"That was the way it started. I goaded myself on and on with crazy stunts till I became known in every village through the valley. People laughed at everything I did, even when I forgot myself and tried to be serious. They began to laugh when they caught sight of me. Father cuffed me from morning till night, but if anything I got even more wild. I never stuttered now. I had learned to forget myself in the clown, who did not fear words. Soon I no longer needed any goading.

"But then one day when I was eighteen a great sadness swept over me. That was the greatest joke of all! What business did a fool have being sad? The neighbors pleaded, 'Why are you sad, Poldé Struna?' 'Have you fallen in love, Poldé Struna?' I began to laugh again, but this time my laughter was close to tears. In that one clear moment I had glimpsed that the clown was running away with me, destroying all that had been real in me. I had sold myself for a laugh. I was no longer Poldé Struna, but a stranger. I began to cry and the peasants slowly moved away.

"I did not know how to change myself back to Poldé Struna. I had learned not to fear words and syllables, so I did not stutter now. But I could not get back into the real Poldé Struna. It was the clown who spoke, who acted.

"I left for Trieste, where nobody knew me, as a clown or anything else. I stopped myself from laughing, acting foolishly. But this was worse, for now I had not even the comfort of being a clown. I was nothing. Not even the old unhappy, miserable Poldé.

"Then I met a man. He had been to America. I watched him, the way he swung his shoulders through the crowds, how he stared down with his eyes the petty officials who demanded from him a more fitting respect. I had given many names to this thing I saw he carried in himself. I wanted it. It showed itself in

his walk, in the way he looked at you. He called it America.

"I decided to go to this land of miracles. I had heard stories of men who had gone there and lifted themselves up in spite of what they had been. Perhaps I could do the same: become another man, a better one. It was my last chance.

"So I came. And what am I?

"A laborer sweeping floors, afraid to speak up for myself, afraid to become a real person though I want to, afraid to take the chance that will determine once and for all whether or not I'm really good inside. I had thought America would change me. I know now it is men themselves who must change, who must measure up to America's bigness. That is why they lift themselves up, to meet that bigness."

The next morning I could say nothing to him when we met.

Impulsively, I knocked on his door that evening. He opened it. His shoulders were tremendously stooped, his arms hung at his sides. He stared at me with heavy tired eyes, then motioned me to come in, as though he scarcely expected me to. At the same time his eyes seemed to blaze in a way I had never seen before.

"Sit down on the bed, Pavlek, and let me talk to you. You are closer to me than anyone here.

"I'm grateful to you, Pavlek, and to your America, to you and your pride in being an American. But you were wrong when you said one needed to be born here to be an American. It is America that is born in men. It was in me a long time before I ever saw America. I could have been born in Poland, Russia, China; with a white face, black face or a yellow face; it would have been the same. Always America is there for anyone who has the strength to reach to it in himself. That is what I have learned here, watching the

people in the streets, their ways of walking and talking, speaking up for themselves, measuring the America within themselves up to the bigness outside, and growing, growing. That is why I had to come here, to learn this."

The next few days Uncle Poldé was almost cheerful. He carried a secret smile on his lips. But soon he turned moody again, already discouraged. He tried to explain himself to me. "Pavlek, where does one begin—?"

My mother invited him downstairs, to draw him out of his attic but he waited



till it was dark before he took a short walk and came right back again. He was ashamed to face me. A gloom settled on our house.

My father began to feel sorry for him and tried to get him to talk, but Uncle Poldé dismissed each pleasantry with a dismal nod of his head.

We could not smile without feeling guilt. His sad figure forever intruded.

My brother related that at the factory

COMMON GROUND

the workers no longer chafed Uncle Poldé, but regarded him uneasily.

He covered us like a shadow.

Then, early one afternoon my brother came running home from work. He made straight for my mother, began to tell her something that had to do with Uncle Poldé.

We feared the worst.

My brother could hardly talk. Finally we made out that Uncle Poldé had clouted the foreman and left the factory.

"He was working," started my brother again, "when the man began to nag him. And for good reasons, too. Uncle Poldé's been working like a dreamer these last few days. The foreman gave it to him good and hard. He said things nobody decent would stand for. But Uncle Poldé did nothing. He listened. Then, of a sudden, as though something had been mounting up in him, Uncle Poldé lifted himself, stretched to his full height. He grinned from ear to ear so that his whole face was changed, and brought his fist down on the man's head, knocking him down, and then he strode out of the shop, with that grin still on his face."

When Tony finished, my mother said

nothing. She went into her room. Tony and I looked at each other.

For the rest of the afternoon we waited for Uncle Poldé. My father returned from work and we had supper. There was little talk. No one knew what to say.

Finally, about ten o'clock, Uncle Poldé came in and went upstairs to his room. I followed him. He heard me coming and held the door open for me. "Come in," he said, a smile playing over his lips.

He was packing his belongings in the wicker basket he had brought with him from the old country. "It is done," he said. He strode across the attic floor, almost knocking his head against the rafters. It was the first time I had seen him stretched so tall. He glanced about him. "I'll need a bigger room," he said.

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Kurt Werth is the illustrator.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

One of democracy's cherished rights is that of its citizens to express themselves freely on any subject—from a ball game to a Presidential election. Through the press, the radio, the ballot box. . . on the platform, on Main Street. . . in the city square, at Town Meeting. . . here is where America decides its issues; here is where its laws are made, its leaders chosen, its destiny shaped. In the tiniest hamlet as in the most crowded city, the people are the ultimate authority. They may speak in different languages. But their voice is one voice—a free people united.

FOREIGN-LANGUAGE RADIO AND THE WAR

CARL J. FRIEDRICH

As you turn the dial of your radio, you will hear, from time to time throughout America, the sound of voices talking an alien tongue. Most frequently you will hear Italian and Spanish, Polish and Yiddish. Often your ear will catch the Scandinavian languages, German, or French; sometimes Russian, Greek, Portuguese, Czech, Lithuanian, Finnish, and other tongues. You may be merely annoyed, or you may try to catch the foreign sounds with interest in their message. If you do, you will hear much the same fare that the radio offers in English. The voices are a vivid symbol of the freedom that is ours, the freedom of a people from many lands.

There are those who would insist these voices have no right to be heard here, that everyone should speak English or get off the air. Only the other day in a Congressional hearing, Representative Martin J. Kennedy of New York expressed this view.

Here is the crux of the issue for democracy. To what extent is the majority justified in imposing its cultural preferences upon the minority? Louis Adamic has put the answer broadly: "America has always welcomed diversity, variety, differences." Perhaps there is a bit of wishful thinking here; for America has been torn between the generous view set forth by Adamic—a view celebrated in immortal poetry by Walt Whitman—and the narrow view symbolized by the KKK, and voiced at present by such men as Pegler. It is, therefore, hardly surprising

that the problem of foreign-language broadcasting should have become highly controversial, with the nativists howling for its immediate suppression.

A strong and genuine democracy is, however, not only found in the ready acceptance of the will of the majority, but also in a scrupulous regard for the feelings and convictions of its minorities. As Edward Heimann has put it: "No majority, unless it abrogates democracy, can decide to kill the members of the minority. . . to repeal the rights of national or religious groups or to prohibit the free and dignified expression of independent and possibly non-conformist opinions."

What more important right in the whole field of freedom of expression is there than the right to communicate with each other in a language one understands? No matter how ardently we may desire that all our immigrants and their children should learn the language of Shakespeare and of Lincoln—and I for one certainly do desire this most strongly—we cannot close our eyes to the hard facts. An Italian or Russian or German who came here without much schooling, who was immediately confronted with the hard struggle of winning an immigrant's livelihood, has had little chance to learn another language. His background was against it; there was little free time and leisure, even if there was the ability. (See letter to Louis Adamic, page 88. Ed.) If he married a girl of his own folk, their love-making and all the other intimacies of living together were not likely to be

in a foreign tongue, even if he gradually picked it up as the children went to school and insisted on speaking the language. Research has shown time and again that women particularly are very slow in picking up the American language, and their daughters working with them in the home in turn acquire the habit of speaking the language of the old folks. Why should these hundreds of thousands of good Americans be deprived of broadcasts in their native tongue—the language which speaks to them with the intimacy of felt experience? Shall we allow a situation to develop whereby we deny these fellow Americans one of the four freedoms for which we are engaged in this war?

II

Yet, like all freedoms, the freedom to speak any language can be abused. It has been frightfully abused until very recently. If you had listened two years ago in Boston, you might have heard a fellow named Ubaldo Guidi comment upon current events along straight fascist lines. As one observer put it: "Sure he was a fascist, and he thought he had a right to be one." And no doubt that was our democratic philosophy. It is another question whether we as believers in democracy and freedom had a right to let this sort of corrupting of the minds of our immigrants go on and on without ever doing anything about it. It is even more of a question whether the broadcasting stations had a right to permit such material on the air without even an attempt at counteracting it. For broadcasters were not supposed to permit controversial issues on paid time; they were to broadcast "in the public interest." It requires some stretch of imagination to defend the proposition that it was in the public interest to have our immigrants' regard for American traditions

and institutions belittled day in and day out.

And the belittling was not all. There were, more recently, some shocking cases of treason and sabotage. At the last meeting of the National Association of Broadcasters, a group of managers of foreign-language broadcast stations sat down for breakfast with Lee Falk, the able and sensible chief of the radio section of the Foreign-Language Division of the Office of Facts and Figures. After the general talk, so *Variety* reported, many of those present "took down their hair" and began to tell some of their experiences. Basically it was the old, old story of the small station's dependence upon the whims and prejudices of local advertisers. But the story acquired new meaning and significance in the foreign-language context, because the advertisers have so often been the more-or-less willing channels of fascist agents in this country. Not infrequently the pressure was worked through the consulates. Importers of the products of the home country, such as olive oil and macaroni, were readily persuaded of the wisdom of employing such men as Guidi, since "he sold the stuff." All they cared about was the purely commercial aspect. The free-lance announcer salesman was left pretty much to himself. No wonder the consular agents of the Axis and their satellites found this situation a profitable pond to fish in. The German and the Italian governments both set up special services to "aid" the announcers by furnishing them special news items and other Axis-slanted program material. This manipulation of information and propaganda worked to the detriment of our immigrant groups for years. Often deeply disappointed about their lot here, these "foreigners" were prepared to listen to anti-democratic, pro-fascist interpretations of the news and in course of time to become embittered and frankly hostile.

But the managers at that luncheon told of more serious, in fact, of incredible happenings. The operator of one foreign-language station in Greater New York told of catching the announcer for a sponsored phonograph record program dedicating musical numbers to the captain and the crew of the steamship so-and-so which was leaving New York harbor that night. Before this broadcaster could continue, so *Variety* reported on May 20, another jumped up and demanded to know what the other fellow had done about it. He had protested to the announcer, he said, and the next thing he knew his station had lost and another had acquired the account.

It is hardly surprising that the public reaction to such occurrences, and even to the broader infiltration of anti-democratic thought and information should have been: "Away with the foreign-language broadcast." This was also the reaction of many of the broadcasters themselves. Demands began to pour in to the FCC from irate listeners, demanding the Commission stop this type of thing. Many foreign-language broadcasts were cancelled, and some stations abandoned such programs entirely. Whether it was patriotic indignation or just plain fear for their business, it is difficult to say. Both undoubtedly played a role.

In response to these demands the Federal Communications Commission did a number of things: it set up an elaborate monitoring service; called for effective studio supervision and control; and sent out a five-page questionnaire to all foreign-language stations—foreign linguists as the trade calls them—asking them for help "in securing information concerning the present extent and character of broadcasts other than English, the part these broadcasts play in the lives of the foreign-language groups, and the comparative value of such broadcasts to ad-

vertisers and others as a means of reaching such foreign-language groups." The questionnaire inquired about the nature and sponsorship of such programs, the station's policy with regard to them, the reasons for discontinuance or refusal of particular programs, and the methods of controlling their content. On the basis of a rather full answer, the FCC compiled a comprehensive survey of the extent and nature of such broadcasts, which became the basis of their monitoring service.

At the same time the Commission definitely decided against stopping foreign-language broadcasts. James Fly, the Chairman, stated publicly that the government did not wish to see them stopped. After all, what about the listeners? Were they not entitled to some consideration?

For the corruption of foreign-language broadcasting was hardly the listeners' fault. Dependent upon broadcasts in a language they could understand, they took what they could get. The rest of us paid little or no attention to their needs, and thus permitted them to become the victims of hostile anti-democratic propaganda. In a democracy at peace, this was deplorable yet perhaps difficult to avoid. In a democracy at war, it cannot be allowed to continue.

For now the spirit, the morale, of every one of us is of vital importance. We cannot reach our newer immigrant groups with messages calling for sacrifice and cooperation if we do not couch them in a language they can understand. And when I say "understand," I do not mean "figure out with a dictionary"; I mean "respond to instantly"; I mean "take in with heart and soul." Garibaldi's song of freedom quickens the heartbeat of every man, woman, and child with an Italian background, while "Yankee Doodle" doesn't. If we want our neighbors from many lands with us, if we want their morale as

high as ours, it is the better part of wisdom to shape our message of democracy and freedom in their own speech. We are the gainers here, and we are the gainers abroad. Every song of freedom composed in America, every message of liberation from tyranny conceived and stated here, becomes a weapon in our hands to be thrust into the side of the enemy.

It may even be argued that we in America have never gone far enough in maintaining the native culture of our immigrants. The spirit of the 19th century was against it. All over the world cultural values were squandered and often recklessly destroyed. The results have been brilliantly portrayed by Lewis Mumford in his *Culture of Cities*. This callous disregard of the immature machine age for cultural values fostered the cheap conception of "Americanization" by which simple folk brought up in a centuries-old peasant culture were mercilessly urged "to forget the old country." It was claimed that democracy meant just that. No thought was given to the fact that Switzerland, the oldest and most deeply rooted democracy in Europe, had always lived and prospered with three languages and at least five native cultures of very distinctive flavor. Not even the experience of our immediate neighbors to the north made much of any impression; the fact that the French Canadians had been allowed to maintain their native speech and culture for generations was disregarded. Yet democracy was just as deeply embedded in Canada as in the United States. The Common Council for American Unity stands, of course, for sounder views. It recognizes the cultural gain which can be derived from bi-linguality. It urges the advantage of diversity and the resulting cross-fertilization of the diverse groups.

But the reply is made: this is no time

to cultivate such diversity. America is engaged in a mortal combat and we had better hang together or we will hang separately. True. But such hanging together does not depend upon using the English language. It depends upon being moved by common concern for common objectives. It calls for united action, to destroy the fascist powers which threaten us from within and from without.

III

What this means in terms of foreign-language broadcasting is that we must seek to undo in a few months the harm we have allowed our enemies to perpetrate over many years. Few, if any, ever listened to the ardent pleas of Italian American anti-fascists or of German American anti-Nazis. The German American Congress for Democracy, for instance, led by such vigorous anti-Nazis as Gerhart Seger, have had little co-operation from broadcasters in the past. The Loyal Americans of German Descent, sharply anti-fascist in orientation, found its proposed program material described as "controversial" before Pearl Harbor, because it hit vigorously at the Nazis and their Fuehrer. But this is not surprising when national organizations such as the Council for Democracy found it very difficult to persuade radio stations to carry vigorously anti-fascist material in English before Pearl Harbor. I remember particularly one proposal, based upon an astounding mass of biographical data. The program was to present in dramatic form what had happened under Hitler to the little people—workers, farmers, doctors, housewives—under the heading: "It must not happen here." This was in the spring of 1941, and the proposal was never acted upon.

With that attitude prevailing as far as

English-language programs were concerned, it is not so strange that anti-fascists of German and Italian origin could not get on the air "because their views were controversial." Indeed, the foreign-language advertisers, egged on by the Guidis and their ilk, objected violently to broadcasts by such fighters as Gaetano Salvemini, and insisted the air be kept free of them. Nor would other American businessmen hire them to put on foreign-language programs which might insinuate to the immigrant groups in their own languages what was great and good in democracy and what was foul and heinous in fascism and Hitlerism. For that again was "controversial."

The truth of the matter is that most of us did not care. I admit that I myself, although professionally concerned with radio research, paid practically no attention to the foreign linguists until the summer of 1940 when the fall of France catapulted us into action for a renaissance of democracy. But while it was late, a great deal might have been done between then and Pearl Harbor, had vigorous support been forthcoming. Yet all through the winter of 1940-41 the FCC labored in more-or-less splendid isolation to check what was going on, with the Department of Justice and the Office of Education about the only agencies making any constructive efforts, as epitomized in their programs of *Americans All*, *Immigrants All* and *I Am an American*. The government, eyed with bitter hostility by the fascist sympathizers in America First and other such organizations, had to step with great caution, especially since Senator Wheeler as Chairman of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee held the whip hand over the regulating agency.

If American business could have been persuaded of the reality of the Axis threat right in this country, it might have gone

into the foreign linguists and put on programs of telling power and real effectiveness. Such programs might have had a profound effect upon the thinking of immigrant groups alienated by years of slick, insinuating propaganda. The very intonation with which some newscasters used to pronounce the word "democracy" was worthy of an Adolf Hitler. Typical Axis slogans were inserted into apparently innocuous copy; announcers, while presumably selling bonds, spoke of America as the greatest "have" nation of the world, as contrasted with the "have-nots."

It is characteristic that among the groups of Italian Americans we investigated there were many who preferred the fascist to the American news because, said they, the American news is full of propaganda. They had become so completely conditioned by the verbiage issued from Rome as to respond with hostility toward news slanted in favor of America. (There is no such thing as unbiased news. All news is selected, and the selection involves choice and judgment. We have the illusion that news is neutral when the selection is made by people with preferences identical with our own.)

Part of the trouble lies in the fact that we have never given the pro-democratic and hence genuinely pro-American elements among our immigrant population a break. They know much better than others what to select from the news for their own folk, that it is perfectly natural for an Italian American listening audience to want news concerned with Italy emphasized. And they know much better than outsiders that members of the group like certain types of drama much better than the kind offered in our regular programs. There is, in other words, no room for a patronizing, condescending, "holier-than-thou" attitude on our part here. It is rather a question of help-

COMMON GROUND

ing the pro-democratic elements among the foreign-language groups to express themselves by giving them the aid which the pro-Axis elements enjoyed so long.

IV

Far from taking the foreign-language programs off the air, the remedy lies in the direction of a determined civic effort to have comprehensive programming of a quality which will compare favorably with existing broadcasts in English. Considerable strides have been made lately in building such pro-democratic and anti-fascist schedules. *wov* in New York, devoted throughout the day to Italian programs, led the editor of *Variety* on July 1 to say:

"*wov* broadcasts. . . [are] presumably designed to please the less cultured part of New York City's first and second generation Italo-Americans, who collectively represent some 15.5 per cent of the city's population.

"*wov* is wholly antiseptic as regards pro-Axis material and apparently has been for some time. Scattered through its schedule are a number of pro-democratic programs. The schedule is quite literally and liberally dotted with public service announcements for government-endorsed citizen-participation activities. The newscasts are uniformly captioned to stress that only United States sources are used and to underline that such news most easily and most effectively reaches Italians of a certain type through such lingual broadcasts."

WHOM in Jersey City broadcasts in ten languages, some of it also strikingly outspoken, the German broadcasts most explicit. One program, *Der Menschenfreund*, goes "beyond anything noted on WHOM in any language to sell democracy to the skeptical ones whose racial tugs are

naturally against rather than naturally with Uncle Sam." WMEX in Boston now features a daily program of an outspokenly pro-democratic slant in Italian. WBNX offers a rich foreign-language fare, in Italian, German, Greek, Ukrainian, French, Polish, Spanish, Yiddish, Lithuanian, and Armenian. It has recently put on a program developed by the German American Congress for Democracy, entitled: "We Did It Before, We'll Do It Again." It also features a German Housewife's Hour in which American women with a German background are asked to help English children, turn in rubber salvage, and help American boys in the United States Army.

Encouraging also is the action of WRJM of Racine, Wisconsin; in collaboration with the anti-Nazi Wisconsin Federation of German American Societies they undertook to organize an outspokenly anti-Nazi program and build a network of stations covering Wisconsin to broadcast the series—this in answer to the decision of a Milwaukee station to drop German-language broadcasting, after having for years carried rather objectionable material.

Not all of these activities are of recent date. Outstanding among earlier efforts is the work in Cleveland, where a group of experts in foreign-language broadcasting formed The Nationalities Broadcasting Association to promote better understanding. It consists of a considerable number of foreign-language organizations. Three years ago it adopted a set of rules which have stood the test of war censorship. Under these self-imposed regulations, broadcasters must submit, 48 hours before the broadcast, script and translation to the Association, which checks the material and transmits it to the station. If the script is altered after it has been submitted, the group is punished by loss of

membership in the Association and consequent loss of the opportunity to broadcast. The Association also sets definite limits to the amount and kind of program material, and usually assumes responsibility for the programs. All are carefully monitored, but there is believed to be little danger, because announcers have long records of complete loyalty to democracy. The dominant languages here are Rumanian, Czech, Hungarian, Slovak, Slovene, and Polish.

The experience in Cleveland shows that self-regulation can work effectively if carried on by the foreign-language groups themselves. It remains to be seen whether it can be accomplished by the stations. After the storm created by the Cleveland meeting of the NAB, foreign-language stations got together and established the Foreign-Language Broadcasters Wartime Control with offices in Washington. Presided over by Arthur Simon of WPEN, Philadelphia, this committee established a code of wartime practices, the most important feature of which is close control of the actual broadcasting personnel. But the attempt to centralize that control aroused such strong objections that authority over programs and personnel was withdrawn from the central committee and returned to the stations. It is, to be sure, true that stations, under the law, are responsible for what goes on the air, but that does not, of course, prevent them from subjecting themselves voluntarily to additional controls. In view of what has happened in the past, it seems more than doubtful whether the individual station is in a position to control programs and personnel effectively. Even when reinforced by regulatory efforts of the FCC, the predominantly small stations doing foreign-language broadcasting are not in a favorable position to check the background of personnel which advertisers and pressure

groups may suggest, nor do they have facilities for checking program material.

Nor are they in a position to accomplish the stupendous task of undoing the damage which has been allowed to accumulate over the last twenty years by our neglect. The powerful stations must step into the breach. Network-owned or affiliated stations like WABC in New York, WBZ and WEEI in Boston, WOR in Newark, and their big sisters in St. Louis, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and other big metropolitan centers have a magnificent opportunity here. In the past they have shied away from foreign-language programs because of audience limitations. They naturally do not want to lose their large English-speaking audience during a foreign-language interval. But by skillful use of program material this danger can be avoided. Music, written in a language we all understand, can be the central attraction here. War messages and other brief items can be inserted right after the English and, incidentally, help all Americans to be broader and more neighborly in their attitudes toward each other. But most important of all would be brief news spots in the key foreign languages. These could be sponsored throughout the country by the newspapers which now sponsor English news broadcasts. This is no idle speculation; I know of at least one such paper in a big metropolitan center which is negotiating with the leading station for a five-minute Italian news summary each night. Such broadcasts would be very important, for many foreign-language groups do not now have access to good news. It is not feasible to depend only upon foreign-language newspapers. Research has shown there are large numbers of people restricted to the use of a foreign language who do not and often cannot (for lack of time or knowledge) read a foreign-language paper.

V

The foreign-language groups must be given a greater sense of "belonging." We cannot expect them to identify themselves with us unless we identify ourselves with them. Foreign-language broadcasts, if introduced by appropriate English announcements, can do a great deal here. If war heroes with recent Old-World backgrounds are humanly presented in such programs, they will emphasize the fight of all our people, no matter where born, against the common enemy of freedom. There can be no question that such programs will call for patience on the part of broadcasters and public alike. They will call for much talent and hard work. Our big stations with the best resources for program building have a decisive function here in aiding wartime morale.

There is little doubt that such a comprehensive program service, implementing the present station activities, could have

a powerful influence. If executed with skill and real "feel" for the thought and tradition of the particular group concerned, they have a good chance of undoing the dirty work of the Axis agents in short order. For, after all, our story is the better one. It has merely suffered by neglect.

Dr. Carl J. Friedrich is director of the Radio Broadcasting Research Project at Harvard University, where he is professor of government. His latest volume, The New Belief in the Common Man, is reviewed in this issue.

Dr. Friedrich's collaborators in this Harvard study of foreign-language broadcasting, under a grant from the Rockefeller General Education Board, have been Mrs. Jeanette Sayre Smith, Dr. Jerome Bruner, and Mr. Edward Suchman, as well as Dr. Paul Lazarsfeld, director of the Office of Radio Research at Columbia University.

THE SOUND OF HOME

GEORGE AND HELEN PAPASHVILY

WHEN I got to San Francisco in 1930, I was five years from Tiflis. Five years in Ambridge and Pittsburgh and Detroit and Colorado—five years, and in all that time I never heard one word spoken in my own language, Georgian.

Of course wherever I was I looked for an Armenian or a Syrian—sometimes one of them can speak a little Georgian. But I never had luck.

Once in Detroit a Turk told me his cousin in Pontiac knew a man who could speak Georgian. So on my day off I rode over on the bus and found the cousin. But it turned out his friend had been in Batum only a week or two in 1918. He knew the Promenade; he knew the fruit vendors, our keentos—"but the language? Well, naturally, in two weeks—"

So we ate a little together, some sausage, some bread, and drank a few glasses of wine.

"I know," the Turk's cousin said—his name was Aslan—"I know how it is. I went in Indiana State once for a cook. Six months, by God, I no talk to nobody. I no like it for a thousand dollars cash."

When I got to San Francisco, I thought maybe through Siberia there might be somebody, anybody who could speak Georgian. I asked everywhere—in the church, in the delicatessen, in the Russian Club, all over.

The Armenian deacon, he heard about it. One night he came to my room and said, "A Georgian lady is married with an Armenian. I take you by her, and maybe she can talk with you."

So we went to her house and she was a Georgian, but she couldn't speak with me. She made her apologies in Russian. Her father and mother had taken her to Vladikavkaz when she was one year old. . . . "Excuse me, please, but I can't say one word in Georgian."

So it went into the second year I was in California.

Then one day I heard about the Big Professors at the University of California. They were writing books and speaking many languages, and the students came from everywhere to learn from them. So I thought—such Big Professors—maybe one of them can speak Georgian.

On my day off I took plenty of time and got dressed up and I went across the Bay to Berkeley. High up in a marble building I found two men. Syrian, Russian, Greek, Persian, Armenian, Tartar, they were speaking all those languages like English—but Georgian, no, not a word.

They shook their heads and one took down a big book from the shelf. He said, "Do you know you speak one of the few tongues in the world that is unrelated to any other language group?"

"Traces of the Sumerian may be noted in it, I believe," said the other.

They had me speak to them in Georgian. But to speak without hope of an answer is to beat on a split drum head. I shook hands with them and went away.

And after that, when I saw it was hopeless, I began to carry songs around with me in my throat—as some have pocket pieces to touch.

When I walked along or worked at the bench, I would sing little bits that came into my head. "*Changouri es sacartvelo oh del la del eo*: Our Georgia is a singing lute, we the strings upon it."

People in the street would turn around and the boys in the shop would laugh. But wherever I was, I sang.

"Com Alexanderum ovsadu, musika migralsa. Rasnim, sortim: In Alexander Avenue, the music there is playing," I was singing the day I went down to the new laundry for my shirts. "There the music is playing: Rasnim, sortim—"

The lady behind the counter stared when she took the ticket from me, but I was used to that.

"You sing in a funny language?"

"Yes, Madam," I said.

"My father speaks a funny language, too. A very funny one. He put a piece in the Examiner once. Ten years ago. 'I pay \$1,000 anybody can speak my language,' he said. 'Signed Al. Cervaux.' A few people came, but nobody spoke it. It's a funny language."

"I guess all languages are funny to those not speaking them, Madam. *Ims Gabridebe, Ims Gabridebe*: Fly, butterfly, fly."

"I call him anyway. Papa! Papa!!"

"Skalsh Napoti, *harali haralo*. Skalsh Napoti—" The tunes wouldn't stay out of my mouth.

"Pa—pa!!"

The door of the back office opened and an old man popped out. "Skalsh Napoti? Who sings Skalsh Napoti?" His voice creaked on the song like a dry ox-yoke.

"*Gamarjueba, batano*." I went toward him. "May yours be the victory in battle, sir."

And he opened his arms and kissed me, and the tears rolled down his cheeks so fast they almost drowned his answer.

"*Gagemarjos, Shvilo. Madelobt bel*

ewar: Thank God that the sun rose on this day, my boy."

"So, at last! I hear my own language again after six years!"

His daughter brought him the chair and I sat on the floor beside him.

"Six years," he said in Georgian. "Six years and you complain! Think of me, my son. Today I have heard the sound of home for the first time in thirty years."

When he was two years old, he told me, his mother and his father, a French sea captain, had died of fever in the harbor of Batum, and a Georgian family had taken him home to live with them. When he was a man he had gone to sea, and finally he had come to San Francisco in America and there he had been ever since.

Now, every night when my work is over, I stop by the laundry for Papa Cervaux, and we buy dry olives and salt cheese and cucumbers and bread, and we go home to his basement and tap a barrel. For in all the thirty years when he never heard our language, he never forgot how to make good wine.

We sit in the cellar doorway under the arbor and sing and tell stories and Keento jokes and histories. We take turns reciting "The Man in the Panther's Skin."

We talk and we talk.

We never get tired. The words roll out from our mouths like the Kura River in spring, and our ears are full of hearing.

George Papashvily came to the United States in 1923. "My family were emigrants, too—" writes his wife, Helen—"two hundred years earlier." He works as machinist in a defense plant, but "what he likes best and does in every moment of his spare time is to sculpture in stone. The way we do a story together is—he tells me something, and I write it down."

ROCK, CHURCH, ROCK!

ARNA BONTEMPS

BACK in 1925, audiences at the old Monogram Theatre, 35th and State in Chicago, found themselves centering more and more attention on a lanky, foot-patting piano player called Georgia Tom. There was a boy to watch!

Georgia Tom had blues in his mind as well as in his feet and his hands. He had composed Ma Rainey's popular theme music:

*Rain on the ocean,
Rain on the deep blue sea,*

not to mention scores of other blues. The kid was a natural. If the blues idiom meant anything to you, he was your boy. The only trouble was that the more you watched Georgia Tom, the less you saw him. It was downright quaint the way he bobbed in and out of things. Presently the hard-working boogie-woogie player dropped out of sight completely, and the name of Georgia Tom was forgotten.

Five or six years later, observers of such phenomena noticed that Negro churches, particularly the storefront congregations, the Sanctified groups and the shouting Baptists, were swaying and jumping as never before. Mighty rhythms rocked the churches. A wave of fresh rapture came over the people. Nobody knew just why. True, the Depression had knocked most of the folks off their feet and sent them hurrying back to church, but did that explain this tremendous impulse to get out of their seats and praise God in the aisles? It was also true that many new songs were being introduced from time

to time—songs which were different—but what did that have to do with this new ecstasy? A few of the more inquiring members discovered that the best and most lively of the new songs were credited to Thomas A. Dorsey, composer, but there were few people anywhere who connected Dorsey with the Georgia Tom of former years. The transformation had been complete. Well—almost complete.

Dorsey—not to be confused with the white orchestra leader of the same name—was born near Atlanta, the son of a country preacher. Gawky and shy, sensitive about his looks, snubbed by the more high-toned colored boys and girls of the city, young Tom early set his mind on learning to play the piano. This involved walking four miles a day, four days a week (since there was no piano in his home), but it was worth the effort and the results were completely satisfactory.

Within two years the funny-looking country kid was able to turn a Saturday Night Stomp upside down with his playing. City youngsters started calling him Barrel House Tom. Such stomp pianists as Lark Lee, Soap Stick, Long Boy, Nome Burkes, and Charlie Spann had to move over and make room for the sad-faced newcomer, Barrel House Tom. People who gave the stomps recognized a difference, too. They were glad to pay a player like Tom a dollar and a half a night for dance music. The second-string boys counted themselves lucky to get fifty cents.

Even in those marvelous days, however, young Dorsey had more in his mind than just punishing a piano. For one thing, there was a girl—a girl with curly black hair hanging over her shoulders like the glory of a thousand queens. When she looked at Tom, he felt like a boy dazzled by the sun. Then, quite suddenly, her family picked up and moved to Birmingham, carrying the daughter with them. If they had only known what they were doing to the poor boy's heart! In this mood, as so often happens, ambition was born. Tom determined to be somebody in his chosen field.

First he tried, with such local help as he could get, to teach himself harmony, composition, instrumentation, and arranging. But being twenty and broken-hearted, he listened to talk about the steel mills of Gary, Indiana. There was good money in those mills—money that would make the wages of a Georgia stomp musician look sick. Moreover, there were golden opportunities up North, opportunities for study, musical opportunities. Perhaps, too, there were other proud dark queens with shiny black glory hanging down over their shoulders. The lure was too great; Tom couldn't resist.

What he failed to consider was the limitation of a thin, willowy body that weighed only 128 pounds. The steel mill all but did him in, but he kept at it till he got his bearings. Which is to say, he kept at it till he could put a little five-piece orchestra together. This orchestra marked the beginning of Georgia Tom, the Barrel House and Saturday Night Stomp phase having been left in Atlanta. It gave him piano practice, and it enabled him to earn money by playing for parties in the steel mill communities of Gary and South Chicago. It provided exercises in the making of band arrangements and piano scores, and it left enough time for

study at the Chicago College of Composition and Arranging. More important still, it started him to reflecting.

One of the first results of this tranquil thought was a little song entitled "Count the Days I'm Gone." The waste basket got that one, but the effort was not wasted. Song followed song; and when Dorsey joined the Pilgrim Baptist Church the following year, he took to writing church songs as some people take to drinking gin. Why Dorsey's songs should have been different from other church music can be left to the imagination.

As it turned out, 1921 was a good year in which to join Pilgrim Baptist Church, for that was the year the National Baptist Convention met in Chicago. More important still, that was the convention which was lifted out of its chairs by a song called "I Do, Don't You?" A. W. Nix did the singing, and the response by the audience was terrific. More important was the fact that a small wheel started turning in the heart of an inconspicuous young convert. The song lifted the boy like angels' wings. Nothing he had pounded out at parties or stomps had ever moved him so completely. Here was his calling. He would make such music.

The effects of that decision are still unmeasured. Dorsey considers "I Do, Don't You?" the first of the so-called "gospel songs." He credits C. A. Tindley, its composer, with originating this style of music. All of which may be fair enough, but it should be quickly added that the songs of this genre have come a long way since Georgia Tom's conversion.

Tindley's productive period fell between 1901 and 1906. Most of his compositions were gospel songs in the conventional sense: tabernacle and revival songs. His, however, leaned heavily on Negro spirituals. At least one widely-used song book classifies Tindley's "Stand by

ROCK, CHURCH, ROCK

Me" as a spiritual. "Nothing Between" could go in the same group with equal reason.

Thomas A. Dorsey joined Pilgrim and commenced to write "gospel songs" at a time when Tindley's were catching on—after fifteen years of delayed action. It is therefore not surprising that Dorsey's first successful songs were distinctly in the mood of his tutor's. The earliest of these, "If I Don't Get There," published in the popular *Gospel Pearl Song Book*, reveals its debt in the very wording of its title. The second followed the same line: "We Will Meet Him in the Sweet By and By." The Special Edition of the *National Baptist Hymnal* included this one. Both have the Dorsey touch, both have swing and bounce, both are definitely "live"; but there is little in either of the special quality that marks the more

against the allurements briefly, then gave up the struggle. The blues are not thrown off by casual resistance. Trifle with them, and they'll get you. They got Georgia Tom. He left the church rocking and swaying to savage rhythms.

The band he joined was called the Whispering Syncopators. It was directed by Will Walker, and among its members were Les Hite, Lionel Hampton, and half a dozen other boys who have since become jazzmen of note. Georgia Tom played with the outfit around Chicago and then

Hide me in Thy bos - om till the

Hide me, hide me, hide me till the

storm of Life is o'er Rock me in the cra - dle of Thy love (of Thy love) Just

feed me, feed me, feed me Je - sus till I want no more then take me to that bless - ed home a - bove.

Copyright 1934 by Thomas A. Dorsey, Publisher, 755 Oakwood Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois

mature Dorsey as an "influence." They are standard tabernacle songs. Perhaps there was a reason.

Like most young fellows who join the church in their early twenties, Dorsey had his temptations. Right off the bat, the devil showed him a red apple: a forty-dollar a week offer to play the blues. Georgia Tom was entranced. He fought

accompanied them on an extended tour. When they started a second turn through the country, he was left behind. Instead, he organized a band for Ma Rainey, the "gold-neck mama" (thanks to a necklace of twenty-dollar gold pieces) of the early blues era. This was a step up, and he went on tour with her at an increased salary. The tricks were running his way.

One day, jittery with excitement, he found himself standing before the dog license cage in the City Hall. It was an embarrassing moment, for what he really wanted was a marriage license. When he got himself straightened out, it was just five minutes before the bureau closed. An hour later, all hitched up and everything, he was off with the band for engagements in the South. While his new wife was not the girl who provoked his sighs in Atlanta, she had her own glory, and Dorsey knew that things were breaking his way. Yet his mind wasn't right. Something told him he was straying. God had to put a stop to it.

That was the time he got sick. For eighteen months he was unable to work. The doctors couldn't do him any good. His money melted away, and his wife had to take a job in a laundry. Still he grew worse and worse. His weight went down to 117 pounds. It was then that his God-fearing sister-in-law decided to take a hand. She took him back to church. It was just what he needed; he commenced to improve immediately. As a matter of fact, it occurred to him that perhaps his sickness was less of the body than of the mind. To prove it, he sat down that very week and wrote a new song, one of his ringing successes, "Someday, Somewhere."

Even a song that has since been so widely approved by church-people of all denominations throughout the Christian world as "Someday, Somewhere" put no meal in the barrel immediately. No publisher wanted it, and when Dorsey had a thousand copies printed at his own expense, nobody would buy them. With money his wife borrowed, he bought envelopes and stamps and circularized people who should have been interested. Nothing happened; not a single sale. There were no choirs interested in singing this kind of number. No musical directors

were impressed. The situation called to mind W. C. Handy's experiences with his blues compositions. The only thing left to Dorsey was to get out and sing his song to the people themselves.

The very next week he made a start, arranging with a preacher to introduce the number in a church service. He arrived as arranged, took his seat on the front row, and waited for his call. The preacher preached. The people sang and prayed. The collection was raised. Finally church was dismissed. Dorsey was still sitting on the front row, waiting to be called upon for his song. The next Sunday he tried again. Then the next, and the next. On the latter occasions he got to sing his song, but the rewards were meager. He counted himself lucky when he sold a dollar and a half's worth of song sheets. Still the humiliating business went on. He wouldn't give up. Eventually the Brunswick Recording Company rescued him by giving him a job arranging music for their recording artists.

Thereafter things went better. He took his wife out of the laundry. In six months he had a thousand dollars in the bank. But he hadn't learned his lesson yet. Temptation came strolling around again. This time, oddly enough, it strummed a guitar, and its name was Tampa Red.

The young singer came to Dorsey's house one evening with some words for a song. He wanted them set to music and a musical arrangement made. Dorsey hemmed and hawed. He had had his fill of blues and stomp music and all the likes of that. Besides, this particular lyric was entitled "It's Tight Like That" and was way out of line. The guitarist pleaded; Dorsey hedged. For two hours the battle raged. In the end Georgia Tom won out over Thomas A. Dorsey. He went to the piano and knocked out the music.

The next day they took it to Vocalian Recording Company, played it. The

ROCK, CHURCH, ROCK

record people jumped with glee. They promptly waxed the number and gave it to the world. Result: the first royalty statement brought \$2,400.19. Tight? Well, I reckon! Dorsey rewarded his loyal wife with all the fine clothes she had dreamed about while she was working in the laundry and he was ill. The rest of the money he put in the bank. But God didn't like "It's Tight Like That," and

Since his return to his true love, definitely and finally, Dorsey has written some songs in the tempered, conventional style of gospel music everywhere. His "Take My Hand, Precious Lord" is a good example. It seems to be almost universally approved and is sung in many churches where there is still a definite resistance to the main body of the Dorsey music. The resistance is understandable. Georgia Tom

Did-n't it rain chil-dren (chil-dren did-n't it) Rain oh, my
 Lord, (Did-n't it,) oh, (Did-n't it,) oh, (Did-n't it,)

Copyright 1939 by Roberta Martin, Martin Studio of Gospel Music, 432 Bowen Avenue, Chicago, Illinois

he didn't like the money that came from it. The bank failed, and it has never yet paid off. Thomas A. Dorsey took that for a lesson.

He has behaved himself ever since. God is pleased, and the church folks are so happy you can hear them half a mile away. They are clapping their hands, patting their feet, and singing for all they are worth. Why shouldn't they? They had as good a reason as the composer for singing

How many times did Jesus lift me,
 How many times did my burdens
 bear?
 How many times has He forgiven my
 sins?
 And when I reach the pearly gates,
 He'll let me in.

is still lurking about. The composer of "Stormy Sea Blues" and "It's Tight Like That" is entitled to come out and take a bow when a congregation sings:

Just hide me in Thy bosom till the
 storm of life is o'er;
 Rock me in the cradle of Thy love.
 Just feed me (feed me, feed me, feed
 me, Jesus) till I want no more;
 Then take me to that blessed home
 above.

It is not surprising that the swing bands fell for the stuff, nor that a church singer like Sister Thorp could join Cab Calloway without changing her songs. Neither is it surprising that the church folks resented this use of their music and complained bitterly. They have their case, and it's a good one.

COMMON GROUND

Meanwhile, the vogue of the ineptly described "gospel songs" continues. Dorsey's campaigns in the churches resulted in the organization of hundreds of choirs that would not blush at the strong rhythms of the new songs. Where the senior choirs wouldn't handle them, the younger elements in the churches have insisted on the organization of junior choirs to sing them. In Negro communities school children sing them on the streets. Here, indeed, is church music that can hold its own against anything on the hit parade. Taxicab drivers tune in Rev. Clarence Cobb's church on Sunday night. His choir sings the new songs almost exclusively, and they make them jump, to say the least.

A flock of other composers have come along since Dorsey showed the way. One of the best is Rev. Cobb himself. Another is Roberta Martin. Dorsey says he discovered her when she was playing and singing in a storefront church on South State Street. Her "Didn't It Rain" is miles ahead of the old spiritual which also bears that name. Something has been added.

What these composers have evolved is perhaps a compound of elements found in the old tabernacle songs, the Negro spirituals, and the blues. Georgia Tom can probably be thanked for the latter. In any case, the seasoning is there now; and, like it or not, it may be hard to get out. Indeed, some churchgoers are now bold enough to ask, "Why shouldn't church songs be lively?"

To this Dorsey would undoubtedly answer, "Amen," but he has also stated his case in verse:

*Make my journey brighter,
Make my burdens lighter,
Help me to do good wherever I can.
Let Thy presence thrill me,
The Holy Spirit fill me,
Keep me in the hollow of Thy han'.
Clap hands, church!*

Arna Bontemps, well-known author of *Black Thunder* and *Drums at Dusk*, was editor of the recent *Father of the Blues* by W. C. Handy.

THE OPEN DOOR

JOHN WARD BAYLY

People of the play:

CANACUM, an Indian	
NAAURA, his secretary	
MR. CARTER	} Pilgrims
MR. WILLIAMS	
MRS. WILLIAMS	
PRISCILLA	
CAPTAIN HAWK	
YOUNG INDIAN	

It is the morning of November 11 in the year 1620.

The scene is the interior of a large barn-like structure on the New England coast. Indeed it might be a slightly remodeled New England barn. There is a good floor, a roof, walls, a fireplace; and there are benches along one wall, and at the right a desk, flanked by some cabinets. There is a large window in the rear wall and through this can be seen the sea, from which juts up a tall pinnacle of rock. There is a label on this pinnacle and the words "Plymouth Rock" can be discerned. A ship is moored to the Rock by the simple device of noosing it with a hawser.

As the curtain rises, we discover the Indian, CANACUM, peering out of the window. He is a big, formidable, annoyed Indian dressed in the manner of the times. But he wears no feathers or warpaint; this is, you might say, his business suit. He turns from the window angrily, crosses to the desk and picks up some papers, fumes over them for a moment, throws them down in

disgust, and is starting for the window again when NAAURA enters. She is an attractive girl of nineteen or so, Indian, svelte, composed. Being of the younger generation, she speaks better than CANACUM, whose tones are guttural and whose sentences are abbreviated.

CANACUM: You late again. Every day now you come late. Why you do this to me?

NAAURA (Smoothly): The eight-thirty canoe was crowded and I had to wait. (She removes her headdress of beads and places it on top of the filing cabinets.)

CANACUM (At the window now and pointing indignantly): Who those people? Why they come here?

NAAURA: They must have been there all night. Hiala said she saw—

CANACUM (Interrupting her): Who are they? What they do here in my country?

NAAURA: I don't know. (She is looking at herself in a small mirror, patting her hair into place, caressing her nose with a small piece of chamois.) Hiala says she saw some of them in a boat, rowing ashore—

CANACUM (Interrupting): No wantum. You go. Tellum we no want.

NAAURA (Brightly): Maybe they're immigrants.

CANACUM: No want immigrants.

NAAURA (Looking out of window): It says Mayflower on the ship. . . . That's a pretty name.

COMMON GROUND

CANACUM: Go tellum. No want immigrants. Quota all gone.

NAAURA: Oh, but it's not. The quota's not exhausted. I put some papers on your desk—

CANACUM: Quota all gone. Why you think we have quota? No want immigrants. You tellum.

NAAURA: But some of them might be young men. Hiala said her cousin in Virginia married an immigrant.

CANACUM: Immigrants no good. They work too cheap.

NAAURA: Oh, that's only at first. As soon as they get on to our American ways, they want just as much as we do.

CANACUM: Labor unions no like. You tellum go 'way.

NAAURA: Their young men have the most beautiful white skin. Hiala said—

CANACUM (*Giving the white skin its due*): Pale skins make good tops for drums.

NAAURA: Ye-es. I like it better on the immigrants. Anyway at first.

CANACUM (*Waving at her commandingly*): You go. Get Witumet. Tellum take plenty arrow, plenty spear. Meet boat. Tell immigrants no wantum. They go.

NAAURA (*Starting toward door at left*): Maybe they won't go.

CANACUM: Get plenty spear. They go. (*But before NAAURA can open the door, the immigrants have entered. They fumble into the room, an assorted group of men and women attired in the fashion of their day, which as to the women is a voluminous one. They include Mr. CARTER, a Pilgrim of thirty-two or so; Mr. WILLIAMS, ten years or so older; his wife, a Pilgrim mother; and her niece PRISCILLA, a gentle girl of twenty-two.*)

CARTER (*Looking about him*): Well! Funny sort of place, isn't it?

WILLIAMS (*Dolefully*): It's not England.

CARTER: Well, it'll have to do us for to-night—unless we want to go back to the ship. Of course we can tear it down later and rebuild—

CANACUM (*Interrupting him*): Who?

CARTER (*Observing NAAURA*): Rather a pretty girl, eh? Wonder what she's doing here.

MRS. WILLIAMS: I don't think we should talk to the women.

CANACUM (*More urgently*): Who?

CARTER (*Noticing him at last*): How! (*To WILLIAMS.*) Big chief's here too. Funny looking duck, isn't he? But the girl's not bad—not bad at all.

MRS. WILLIAMS: I don't like savages.

CANACUM (*Louder*): Who?

CARTER: How! I said "How," old chap.

MRS. WILLIAMS: I don't like the way he talks. Do you suppose he's dangerous?

CARTER: Not at all. That's their greeting. Always say "How!" It's like our "How d'ye do?"

CANACUM (*A voice like thunder*): Who?

CARTER: I said "How"—

CANACUM: Not "How"—Who? Who—are—you?

CARTER: Me? Oh, you mean us!

WILLIAMS (*Solemnly*): We are the Pilgrim Fathers.

CARTER (*To CANACUM*): Yes, I thought you knew. It's in all the history books—will be anyway.

NAAURA (*Demurely*): It wasn't in my history book.

CARTER (*Politely*): No?

NAAURA: No. . . .

MRS. WILLIAMS: I wouldn't go near them, Mr. Carter. They're just savages.

CARTER: Yes, I suppose you're right. (*To WILLIAMS.*) Backward country, America, isn't it?

CANACUM: What you do here in my country?

CARTER: Your country? Oh—oh, I see.

THE OPEN DOOR

- Yes, of course. I see what you mean.
But I've just told you. We're the Pilgrim Fathers.
- CANACUM: You crazy.
- CARTER: That's our ship out there — the *Mayflower*. (Noticing the look of incomprehension on CANACUM's face.) Didn't you learn any American history? We've come to take over. This is our country now.
- CANACUM: You go back. We no want. This our country. We keep. Good-bye!
- MRS. WILLIAMS (To WILLIAMS): What does he want to do? They said it was a free country — that's why we came.
- WILLIAMS: Yes. They told us this was a free country.
- CANACUM: Free! This free country?
- MRS. WILLIAMS: Yes, that's what they said —
- CANACUM (Interrupting): Free for us. We live here. This our country. We Americans — you foreign. Not free to you.
- MRS. WILLIAMS (Indignantly): But we've come to live here.
- CANACUM: You got birth certificate?
- MRS. WILLIAMS: Well, no —
- WILLIAMS: You see we had to go to Holland —
- CANACUM (Interrupting): You got fingerprints?
- MRS. WILLIAMS: Why, no. No, of course not.
- WILLIAMS: You see —
- CANACUM: Why you come here? No got fingerprints. No got birth certificate. You got passport?
- WILLIAMS: Well, not exactly. But we have a grant from the British Colony — a patent you know. Like a license.
- CANACUM: No good. You got forty dollars?
- WILLIAMS: Well, no — not in your money.
- CANACUM: You no good! Go home! Good-bye!
- WILLIAMS: Yes, but we can't —
- CARTER: You know, we came here to live —
- PRISCILLA (Who has been observing all this with eager attention): If we only had Captain Hawk.
- MRS. WILLIAMS: Oh, him!
- CARTER: Captain Hawk's not bad.
- PRISCILLA: Let me go for him. (To NAAURA.) Or you — would you find Captain Hawk for us?
- NAAURA: Captain Hawk?
- PRISCILLA: Yes, he's the Captain of our ship. He brought us here, you know.
- CANACUM (To NAAURA): No can go. (To PRISCILLA.) She secretary. I need.
- NAAURA (To PRISCILLA): Oh, don't mind him. I only work for him. Where is this Captain Hawk? Has he white skin?
- PRISCILLA (Confused): Yes. I — I don't know. He's on the ship — the *Mayflower* — unless he came ashore, too.
- NAAURA (Confidently): I'll find him. (But before she can do this, CAPTAIN HAWK enters. He is a compact, swash-buckling individual of thirty-eight. He strides into the room, brushing the Pilgrims aside in his passage. He pauses in the middle of the room to survey the scene.)
- CAPTAIN: So, this is America, eh? H'm! (He sees NAAURA.) What's your name?
- NAAURA: Naaaura.
- CAPTAIN (Appraising her): You're a very pretty girl. Damned refreshing after all these Pilgrims. You like it here in America?
- NAAURA: Oh, yes. This is a very nice country.
- CAPTAIN: Can't use it all, can you?
- NAAURA: Oh, no. There's plenty of room.
- CAPTAIN: Got room for me?
- NAAURA (Considering him): You have a nice skin, but it's not very white —
- CAPTAIN: Don't let that worry you, my girl. It's whiter than yours.

COMMON GROUND

NAAURA: Yes. . . .

MRS. WILLIAMS (Plucking his arm):
Captain—

CAPTAIN (Ignoring her): You like ships?

NAAURA: I don't know. I never was on a ship—not a big ship like yours. That is your ship, isn't it—out there?

MRS. WILLIAMS (Insistently): Captain Hawk—

CAPTAIN HAWK (Still ignoring her): Yes. Came from England in her. Brought over a load of Pilgrims. Got to get them off my hands now—then I can take you aboard. Who's the head man around here? (To CANACUM.) You! I've got a load of Pilgrims for you.

CANACUM: No wantum.

CAPTAIN: They're here now and you've got to take them. I don't want 'em. They're Pilgrim Fathers—and you know what Pilgrim Fathers are.

CARTER: He never went to school.

CANACUM: What this Pilgrim Father? (To CAPTAIN.) You Father?

CAPTAIN: Me? Not officially.

CANACUM (To CARTER): You Father?

CARTER: Well, no, not exactly. But I may be. You never know.

CANACUM: Where Pilgrim Mothers?

CARTER: Well, you see—

MRS. WILLIAMS (To WILLIAMS): I don't like these dirty Indians. Let us go somewhere else.

CANACUM (To MRS. WILLIAMS): You! You Pilgrim Mother?

MRS. WILLIAMS: I certainly am.

CAPTAIN: I've got a lot more of them aboard ship.

CANACUM (To PRISCILLA): You Pilgrim Mother?

PRISCILLA: No, of course not. (To CAPTAIN HAWK.) Captain Hawk, don't let us stay here.

MRS. WILLIAMS: Just a pack of dirty Indians.

NAAURA: I'm not dirty. Why did you say that?

PRISCILLA (To CAPTAIN HAWK): I'm so glad you're here to protect us, Captain. These savages seem so fierce.

CAPTAIN: They just don't understand.

MRS. WILLIAMS: But what is there to understand?

CAPTAIN: Well, they think this is their country. They don't understand why you people want to take it away from them.

PRISCILLA: Oh, but that's absurd.

CARTER: We're not going to take it away from them—they can still live here.

WILLIAMS: Well, I don't know about that. Maybe. If they behave themselves—

CANACUM (Who has been shuffling among his papers): You—(To WILLIAMS.) where you come from?

WILLIAMS: Why, I'm an Englishman. We're all English.

CARTER: I've been living in Holland—just for a while.

CANACUM (Pouncing upon him): You got papers?

CARTER: Why no. That is, we've all got a license—

CANACUM: You got passport? You got fingerprints? You got entry permit? You got vaccination mark? You got forty dollars?

CARTER: Well, no. Not exactly—

CAPTAIN (Crossing to desk): Now see here! You've got papers all right if you want to find them—the same as I've got guns aboard ship if I want to use them. Dig into those files, get your records, and get these people ashore. Trouble with you is you've got too many papers. I know you immigration people—nasty lot of brass-bound file-keepers. Archives—that's what you've got—instead of brains. Now get going. You think I want to have these Pilgrims on my hands forever? (CAPTAIN HAWK turns on his heel and leaves CANACUM to the Pilgrims. They gather around him—all but PRISCILLA—and

THE OPEN DOOR

- he rummages among his papers.)
PRISCILLA (To CAPTAIN): I'm so glad you're here, Captain.
CAPTAIN: Yes, it's not so bad — not so bad. (To NAAURA.) You like America, eh?
NAAURA: Oh, yes. Don't you like it?
CAPTAIN: Yes, I suppose I do. Chance to get rid of these Pilgrims, anyway.
MRS. WILLIAMS (Rebounding from the group about CANACUM): Oh, Captain—Captain Hawk! He wants to know how old I am.
CAPTAIN: Tell him, ma'am! What harm can it do? He won't be able to count that far.
MRS. WILLIAMS: The idea! A common savage! (She has CAPTAIN HAWK by the arm now.) You must protect me, Captain. (She drags him over to CANACUM's desk.)
PRISCILLA (To NAAURA): You're not going out to the ship, are you?
NAAURA: I don't know. Maybe. You heard him ask me.
PRISCILLA: But you wouldn't go. How could you—without a chaperone? (Eyeing NAAURA.) How do you get such a good figure?
NAAURA: You like it?
PRISCILLA: No, but it must be very useful.
NAAURA: Oh, it is. . . . The Captain likes it.
PRISCILLA: But I don't understand. What makes you like that? (She looks down at her own billowing skirts.) You're not—different, are you?
NAAURA (Laughing): It's the girdle. American girls wear girdles.
PRISCILLA: You mean girths—like a horse?
NAAURA: No, it's a girdle. (Smooths hips.) They're made of rubber.
PRISCILLA (Admiring her): Oh! . . . But isn't it very hard to get rubber?
NAAURA: Yes, but we manage.
PRISCILLA (Fascinated): It's nice—but isn't it immoral?
NAAURA (Happily): Oh, yes.
CANACUM (Rising from his desk): You go! All go home!
MRS. WILLIAMS (Bustling to PRISCILLA): Priscilla, dear, come away from the savages.
CAPTAIN (To CANACUM): Now, see here, you—
CANACUM (Pointing to Pilgrims): You . . . you . . . you . . . you . . . no can stay. You got no passport. No entrance permit. No vaccination. No forty dollars. Besides, quota all gone. This my country. I keep. Good-bye.
MRS. WILLIAMS: But you can't—
CARTER: Now see here, old chap, you can't do this. We haven't all landed yet.
WILLIAMS: Yes, there are a lot more—
CAPTAIN: A whole bloody shipload.
WILLIAMS: We can't go back to Europe. You've got no right—
CANACUM: This my country, and you say I got no right—
NAAURA (In a small clear voice): It's my country, too.
CANACUM (Very indignant): My country—America!
NAAURA (Advancing to meet him): It's my country, too—more than yours, because I've got longer to live in it. I've got something to say about this too, you know.
CANACUM: Why? Why you talk to me about country? You secretary. I talk, you write down.
NAAURA: Not always. Sometimes I talk, too. And I don't always write what you dictate—you'd be in a fine mess if I did.
CANACUM: You too smart.
NAAURA: No, it's not that. You just haven't kept up with the world. You haven't watched what's happening. Look at Europe—

COMMON GROUND

CANACUM: No wantum!

NAAURA: Yes, and a lot of the people who live there don't want it either. And do you know why? Because they're Americans.

CANACUM: Live Europe. . . . How they Americans?

NAAURA: But America isn't a place, Canacum. It isn't just a piece of ground. America is an idea. Anyone who has the right idea is an American — anyone who feels free. If he doesn't, he's just — well, he's something else. He's not American.

CANACUM: Huh! You think I not American?

NAAURA: Well, you're not — not altogether. If you were, you wouldn't make things so difficult for these Pilgrims. Just because you were *born* here doesn't mean that you belong. These Pilgrims were born in Europe but they don't belong there.

CANACUM: I know what you want — white skins. I tell your father —

NAAURA: My father thinks we should let anyone in who wants to come here. He says the country's big enough for everyone, so we've got no right to keep people out. He says we don't own America — nobody owns an idea. It belongs to the whole world — to all the people who want to think our way. He says people have a right to live wherever they want to live, just so long as they behave themselves. He says —

CANACUM: Your father crazy.

NAAURA: Yes, but you're going to let these Pilgrims in. Don't you see, Canacum? You can't keep them out. Nobody can keep people out if they belong here. Even if you sent them away, they'd only come back. Don't you see that? Coming to America's like being born — you can't stop it. Nobody can. It's too big.

CANACUM (*At his desk now and fumbling among his papers*): They got no papers — no fingerprints.

NAAURA: Oh, Canacum, what's the good of fingerprints — or vaccination marks — or forty dollars. People aren't any more American because they've got fingerprints, or scratches on their arms. Here, I'll find the papers for you. (*And promptly she produces them from among the debris on the desk.*)

CANACUM (*Looking at the papers*): No good! No vaccination. You got wrong papers.

NAAURA: They'll do just as well as any others. It's the people we're interested in, not the old papers.

CANACUM: Got no forty dollars.

NAAURA: Oh, well, they'll soon earn something. I wouldn't worry. (*To Pilgrims.*) You see? It's all settled.

MRS. WILLIAMS: You mean we can stay? CANACUM (*Weakly*): No.

NAAURA: Of course you can stay. We want you to stay.

WILLIAMS: We'll have to start building some houses —

CAPTAIN: Now I can get the rest of those bloody Pilgrims off my ship.

PRISCILLA (*To NAAURA*): Will you show me — about the girdles?

NAAURA: Oh, yes, of course. (*To Mrs. WILLIAMS.*) You want to learn, too?

MRS. WILLIAMS: Certainly not!

CAPTAIN (*On his way out and scattering Pilgrims as he goes*): I'll be at sea in an hour.

PRISCILLA: You're not going? Captain!

CAPTAIN: Sure! Why not?

PRISCILLA: But didn't you hear — what she said —

CAPTAIN: I'm no American.

PRISCILLA: But she said —

CAPTAIN: I don't belong here.

CANACUM (*Suddenly generous*): Yes, you stay.

THE OPEN DOOR

CAPTAIN: No, not me.

CANACUM (*Persuasively*): Naaura like you.

CAPTAIN: No, I don't belong here.

MRS. WILLIAMS: Oh, Captain, you can't leave us here alone with these awful savages.

CAPTAIN: Look, Mrs. Williams, I don't belong here and I know it.

PRISCILLA: But she said —

CAPTAIN: Yes, I know. Free people belong in America. It's the home of the free — no matter where they come from. But I'm not free.

MRS. WILLIAMS: Oh, Captain!

PRISCILLA: Captain, please —

CAPTAIN: You know, sometimes I like to tell myself I'm free but I don't believe it. I know better. Real freedom comes when a man settles down to obey the law, but I'm not ready to do that. I used to be a pirate. Maybe I'll be a pirate again. I'm no law-abiding citizen of a free country — not me! You're going to have laws — lots of laws. You'll have to obey 'em, too. That's all part of freedom. But I wouldn't like it. I'm not free enough. You'll have a government too. Well, I never liked governments. Oh, you'll be free, all right, but I'll take my life as I've lived it. So — I'm going back to sea. Well, it's your country now. Save a place for me some time, if I feel free enough. (*The CAPTAIN is on his way out when suddenly a snappy young INDIAN, in proper tribal dress except for a Panama hat and the fact that he carries a briefcase and a very Broadway walking stick, enters with a lilting walk and a broad smile.*)

INDIAN (*To NAAURA*): Hiya, babe, where are the immigrants?

NAAURA (*Trying to ward him off*): Now listen, Hiawatha —

INDIAN (*Blandly*): Keep your girdle on, gorgeous! (*But he spots the immigrants for himself.*) Aaah! (*The hat comes off and the smile grows even wider.*) Howdy, folks! Welcome to America! Now that you've come to our great and glorious land, you'll be wanting to settle down; you'll need a place to live. Come with me and I'll show you some of the niftiest building sites you've ever laid your peepers on — not five minutes from the station — got sidewalks, gas, sewers, fresh air, no slums, and wait till you see the view! (*He is gathering the Pilgrims together, herding them toward the door.*) Say, I've got the very thing for you! Come from England, don't you? Then you like islands. I've got just the thing. *Manhattan Island*. I can let you have the whole place for just twenty-four dollars. You'll love it. Now, how about some life insurance? You'll need cemetery lots, too. I'll fix you up with everything! You've certainly come to the right place!

And as he prattles gaily on
THE CURTAIN FALLS.

John Ward Bayly's short plays have appeared in consecutive issues of the annual collection of best plays published by Dodd, Mead.

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SINCERELY YOURS

LETTERS TO LOUIS ADAMIC

....THERE is one question that concerns my mother that was not listed in your Broadside. She was never taught to read or write, as many other peasant-born children were not.

She was born not very far from Zagreb, Croatia. My grandfather died when she was very young. Her mother, being at the point of starvation, was forced to send her away to work at different farms when she was 8 years of age. She was hired out for a few dollars a year. When my grandmother needed food badly, she received an advance on my mother's salary, which always forced my mother to finish the year out, even though she also didn't have much to eat at the different farms she worked at.

When my mother was 18 years of age, she was considered an old maid. Her mother didn't have a *dota* so naturally she couldn't marry her off well.

A half-brother of Mom's, whom she hardly knew, sent her a ticket to the United States. She traveled steerage.

A year after she came to Chicago, she met and married my dad, also a Croatian.

On their first anniversary J— was born. Two years later M—. Two years later A—. Again, three years later, I was born. Another three years and N—. At that rate you can see that Mom didn't have time to study. She was too fatigued.

My dad was very sickly the first 15 years or so. My mother went to work every time he had his so-called stomach trouble and was home from work. She had five mouths to feed.

Now, since all of us are married, she has more time on her hands and she is ashamed. She has more time to think. Ashamed of what? She cannot explain exactly. Ashamed she cannot read and ashamed to go back to school because she thinks she's too old. You cannot convince her otherwise.

My mother is far from dumb. In fact, I think she is very intelligent. But when I tell people she cannot read or write, they just take it for granted she's a "dumb foreigner."

We don't want people to think that when it is so untrue. Now we keep quiet about it.

When we go to a restaurant, naturally the waitress puts a menu in front of her, and she just looks at it blankly. We always do the ordering for her, but not conspicuously, so as not to hurt her feelings.

We don't know what to do about it. We don't want people to look down upon her, and yet we don't like to tell the whole story of her life so as to justify her not being able to read or write. It seems as if we are making excuses. And for what? What is there to make excuses about? Excuses because she was starving in Europe and had to go to work?

There are many of us second-generation Americans in the same boat. If you would devote a chapter in one of your books to that problem, it would help many of us. Give us your answer. Your *From Many Lands* and *Two-Way Passage* answered many of our questions, but we need more.

My mother is a lot more American than

many of the so-called Yankees. Her sons are helping us win.

N—, who is 22 years old, is now in Ellington Field, Texas, in the midst of a course in pre-flight training. His ambition, at present, is to be a navigator. In January, when he was in his 4B year at Illinois University, his ambition was to be an accountant.

J— is working in an asbestos company. He has one of the jobs that makes you say, "Immigrant's son makes good." For the duration he will be out of town three or more times a week on jobs concerning defense work. Almost everyone says, "Look at the dough he makes!" They should ask themselves if they would like to be separated from their wives and children as often as that. The only thing that keeps him going is the fact that they'll be together a lot after it's all over with.

I would like to have you think about this problem. It may sound like a mole-hill to others, but to those of us who are living in it, it is like a mountain.

... WHEN I hear talk about the problems of the minority, I, a so-called Negro, quickly feel the other side of that attitude could be termed the selfishness of the majority. The solution to many phases of these problems is the education of the majority to a policy of tolerance toward the people who are different either in physical appearance or mores and customs.

I was born in Chicago and so was my soldier husband. We are both graduates of Chicago public schools, State College, and Chicago University. I have lived in my present home for 33 years. My husband's family had lived in the same place 40 years, moving only when we married.

We feel ourselves just Americans, but last summer in Louisiana we were asked to park our car away from the front of a roadside eating shop. Even though my

husband wore the uniform of an officer in the United States Army and we were orderly, quiet, clean, middle-class people, since we had brown faces we were asked to move.

For several generations we have lived here, and even by legal marriage our blood is mixed. Still we are called a minority group. Are we the offenders? Did we create the difficulty? Were we seeking privileges when we asked for sandwiches and expected our 1941 Buick to stand where we parked it? If we had been riding in an evil-smelling cattle-car or acting disorderly, then I could understand the majority member's attitude, but now I cannot.

You must realize, however, that the average person in my group does not care whether he has 10 per cent or 50 per cent white parentage if he can live in a decent house and send his child to a school of his choosing rather than one determined by and insisted upon by the majority.

I only ask of America the right to buy what I can afford and go to see what I please, not in a special section because my skin is brown. If all brown skins implied leprosy and such—segregation would be sane. But why must I park my car at the side of the lot because a couple of hundred years ago some of my ancestors were bought or kidnapped in Africa?

And now, after a second world war is in process and my husband has been away from home fifteen months, in the capital of the great and noble United States I cannot go to a theatre because my face is brown. My children must go to segregated schools, even though by a white man's test one was given an I.Q. of 146. And the test was administered by a white psychologist.

My reaction? What could it be other than doubt, skepticism, contempt, and bitterness? Does white America want real democracy? I doubt it.

Negro Americans ask only that they be allowed to be Americans, to get what their ability entitles them to and the same opportunities as any other man, not at the side door or in specialized units, but just with people as people. This would do away with the Negro problem, which is kept alive by the white man.

What has America gained after several decades of protecting and tolerating racial prejudice? Today a large part of the world smirks and very reasonably doubts our loud proclamations of brotherly love and our campaign of democracy for the world. Why should they believe it when even in a crisis Washington, D.C., has not altered any of its practices of segregation and the armed forces are the most brazen violators of the principle that hundreds are dying to save?

BECAUSE I think I know the real America, I am glad to be serving in her Army.

But in California, my native state, the Native Sons and their fellow-travelers, the farmers and politicians, are trying to have even the voting rights, the citizenship, of us Nisei taken away. Aside from the harm their hate-mongering will arouse, their harangues are not worth an argument. But the idea that men in public office, in responsible positions, should attempt to practice a bit of Hitlerism in this country is hard to understand. It makes one wonder what kind of hearts these men have, that they should so cold-bloodedly persecute a group of people who have already been evacuated from their homes and have lost their professional and business establishments and are almost helpless to fight back.

We were born here, we went to school here. This is our home. Why should we not be loyal? Loyalty should come to us as something that is second nature. It should come to us as it would to the Irish Americans, the Swedish Americans,

and all the other mixed Americans that compose the nation. But no, the jingoists were forever accusing us of disloyalty, and the more imaginative they were the more dangerous we would be. They did not care for facts, for statistics; they did the easiest thing possible, which was to suspect and accuse every Japanese American household in the country of subversive activities. As a result we were forced into flag-waving, sometimes to a ridiculous extent, to show the American public we were really loyal citizens.

Now the Nisei are locked up in camps for the duration. Why should these men continue with their persecutions? The military exigency that put the Japanese Americans behind guarded gates is past. Why should they rant about passing legislation that would make us a generation without a country? The answer has come from the lips of some of the leading jingoists themselves. They want to see the Nisei helpless and unable to fight back for two reasons—economic and racial. The very reasons that Hitler had for persecuting the Jews. What a farce American democracy would be if the Native Sons and the political passengers on their bandwagon should ever succeed in carrying out their program of hate! We would be fighting to preserve democracy abroad, while destroying it at home.

Only because America is the free country that she is could we have this paradoxical state of affairs. But because I know America, I cannot believe such a situation could ever come about. For America is bigger than any group or class.

These are excerpts from some of the thousands of letters reaching Louis Adam-ic in connection with his "Nation of Nations" project. More will be published from time to time.

PLOWING THE DEW UNDER

GRACE CABLE KEROHER

Now that the world is at war, American Mennonite youth stands at the crossroads, with loyalty to country on one hand and a boundary of conscience on the other. For, with them, "They shall beat their swords into plowshares" is more than a Biblical prophecy; it is a fundamental precept in the Mennonite way of life. To many young Kansas Mennonites who stand before their draft boards and plead their conscientious objections, this conscription for military service is a "tale of the devil," a tale centuries old—as old as their religion itself. Their thoughts flicker back across the years to the migrations and wanderings that have characterized the history of their people. They see again the green wheat fields of southern Russia—home of their grandfathers, and scene of stirring events when they, too, battled with conscience on the subject of military service.

In the early '70s, north of the Black Sea in the valley of the Dnieper and across the broad steppes that sweep eastward through southern Russia, wheat grew lush and green. Apricots were in blossom; the leaves of the Russian olives shone silver-gray in the sunlight. Mulberry hedges were fresh and tender, providing an abundance of food for the silkworms. Flocks of sheep and herds of cattle grazed on the hillsides. Nestled in the green fields were more than fifty small villages with cool shady streets, where bright gardens surrounded large tile-roofed houses. Apart from the vil-

lages were enormous houses of baronial splendor, homes of millionaire Mennonites. From the busy seaport cities of Odessa, Sevastopol, and Berdinansk, English ships carried wheat to Liverpool, for southern Russia was the greatest wheat-growing country in all the world.

Amid this scene of peaceful prosperity, the result of eighty years of Mennonite industry, stalwart Mennonite men, black-bonneted Mennonite women, and prim Mennonite children lived the life of the "pure ones" according to the Scriptures, and worshipped according to their consciences. As they went to their churches, morning and evening, and thanked God for His love as expressed in the promise of a harvest to come, they were quite unaware, in their peculiar isolation, that the growing nationalism of middle Europe was bringing an important crisis into their lives.

The blow fell with stunning swiftness in the spring of 1870. An imperial order proclaimed an end to the "special privileges" which had made possible their religious freedom and economic growth.

These "special privileges" had been a part of a clever colonization scheme of Catherine the Great at the time of her accession to the Russian throne. Clearly recognizing the need for industrious colonists to develop her newly acquired crown lands in South Russia, she sent invitations to all the oppressed and persecuted people of Germany to aid in her project and, among other inducements, offered them exemption from military

service. This offer appeared like "an act of God" to a large group of Mennonites in Prussia, where religious freedom was then restricted by both church and state. Thousands in search of freedom of conscience left their prosperous farms to begin a new life on the dreary treeless steppes of Russia. There, for eighty years, under a succession of the most arbitrary rulers of all Europe, they enjoyed religious, economic, and political tolerance such as they had never before experienced. Their prosperous community, a veritable "democracy within an autocracy" where they scrupulously maintained their German language and customs, became the envy of native Russians, from whom they were separated by the strictest social, political, and religious barriers.

A wave of alarm swept through the villages when the full impact of the imperial order became known and the Mennonites realized their local self-government was to be abolished, their children compelled to attend Russian schools under the control of the Orthodox Church, and their sons drafted into the Russian army. Delegation after delegation was sent to St. Petersburg to plead the Mennonite cause. Finally the Czar was persuaded to modify the original order and permit the Mennonites to substitute civil for the hated military service. To the majority this arrangement was satisfactory, but a strong minority could make no compromise with conscience.

"Forestry service for twenty years!" scoffed Isaac Peters. "Any service under the control of the military department—it's just keeping the back door open for entrance into full military service later."

"It's the end of all we've known and enjoyed in Russia," preached young Bernhard Warkentin.

"We'll move!" said others of their leaders. "We'll seek a new land!"

But their roots were deep in Russia.

"Where can we go?" people asked. "Here we have built our schools, our churches, and our homes. Where in all this world is there a place for us?"

"America," answered Cornelius Jansen. "America. Hundreds of our people have found homes there during the past two centuries. In America we will be guaranteed absolute religious freedom. There we can build again just as our fathers built here."

He wrote to Carl Schmidt, an obscure machinery salesman in the little town of Lawrence, Kansas. He explained he had read, in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, letters Schmidt had written to relatives in Prussia. He was impressed, he said, by Schmidt's descriptions of this new state of Kansas, the wonderful opportunities it held for pioneers unafraid to break the virgin soil and take their chances on growing up with the country. He explained why his people wished to leave Russia. "They are farmers," he also wrote, "and will need a lot of land. Will there be room enough in Kansas for a party of several thousand people should they decide to come?"

Big, bespectacled Carl Schmidt read the letter carefully, folded it, and returned it to its envelope. His eyes followed swiftly along the ridge of hills west of town and south to the green valley of the Wakarusa. He contemplated those miles and miles of prairie tumbling away to the West. "Room," he chuckled to himself. "Room—that's one of the best things we have in Kansas." All that new land being opened by the railroads pushing steadily westward across the prairies!

"Yes," he wrote Jansen, "Kansas can take care of an immigration of several thousand people or, for that matter, several hundred thousand. Furthermore, if Kansas by any chance is too small to fill the bill, there is, still farther westward, an unlimited amount of productive land

that will afford room for every Mennonite on earth and their descendants for years to come."

Several months later Schmidt received word from Jansen that a great number of his people had decided to emigrate. A committee of twelve men was already on its way to America to "spy out the promised land."

Schmidt at once hurried to the Santa Fe officials at Topeka, and almost before he knew it he had talked himself into the job of selling Kansas to the Mennonites.

Sold on his adopted country himself, Schmidt didn't doubt for a minute he could sell it to the Mennonites. He made shrewd plans; he even translated parts of the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of Kansas into German for his prospective customers to read.

The only thing he hadn't reckoned with was a trick of nature: a drought so devastating that crops withered and died in the searing heat; and grasshoppers that swarmed in and in many sections devoured every stalk of green. Immigration which had been pouring in from the East stopped. Family after family packed up and left. Wagons headed back were labeled "In God we trusted—in Kansas we busted." Literally the whole state was for sale.

Carl Schmidt had plenty of misgivings by the time the committee arrived and began a tour of the land. They drove on and on over the scorched earth in the withering sun, stopping occasionally for the visitors to get out and study the soil. Schmidt, standing by, cautiously felt his hands, hot and blistered from long driving. The bronzed-faced men bending over to feel the quality of the soil beat the grasshoppers off their faces with one hand while they crumbled dirt between the thumb and forefinger of the other.

"These 'hoppers' have never been here in such numbers before," Schmidt explained apologetically, 98-per-cent fearful his prospects would decide a land grasshoppers liked so well wasn't meant for people at all.

"That's all right," the visitors answered unconcernedly. "We're used to them in Russia. They won't bother us any."

Drought or no drought, grasshoppers or no grasshoppers, by the early fall of 1874 the Mennonites came rolling in. Trainload after trainload arrived—black-bonneted women wearing plain dark dresses over bulbous petticoats; tall full-bearded men in ample, baggy breeches; children by the dozen.

They were going to wild unsettled America, and they brought with them all they had of earthly goods. There were green wagons with wheels that slanted outward from the flaring boxes, farm equipment, elaborate "Russian" buggies, household utensils, iron kettles, copper teakettles, bundles and sacks of clothing, and bulging steamer trunks.

The trunks contained something more than "Sunday clothes"; they held strong earthen jars filled with seed wheat.

Almost overnight the open prairie came alive. Long lines of wagons carrying lumber, household goods, and farm equipment from the railroad crossed the prairie. Everywhere carpenters were busy putting up temporary houses. Mowers were brought out to cut the tall grass to be used for feeding the thousands of oxen and horses. Carloads of breaking plows, "sod-busters," were shipped from Topeka; the ground had yet to be broken "doubly-deep" to receive a dressing of rye and wheat.

Beneath the bustle and activity were many anxious heartbeats. The wheat—would it grow as it had in Russia? This life in the new land—would they again have schools and churches?

The wheat did grow. When harvest came, tiny patches of golden-brown wheat rewarded their efforts. They cut it by hand and spread it in thick piles over the clean prairie sod. Oxen pulled the cumbersome, homemade threshing stone—a large star-shaped affair—and when the straw was lifted away, the sod was covered with a carpet of plump golden wheat.

Elder Gaeddert recorded in his diary: "The Lord in Heaven has presented us with our first harvest in America. From 18 acres wheat, 140 bushels."

"We hadn't sowed much," wrote Elder Wiebe, "but that little brought much. It gave us courage."

There was no way for their American neighbors to tell that these "queer foreigners" who spoke a strange language were Russia's model farmers; that they carried with them the magic key to unlock the Kansas plains. They left them alone at first. The Mennonites plowed, sowed, and harvested; built houses, barns, fences, and granaries; they set out orchards and shade trees. And they drove to the mills with loads and loads of wheat.

Their American neighbors were finally impressed and mystified. Their soft wheat withered in the Kansas sun; Mennonite wheat grew strong and sturdy. Soon they came asking to buy seed wheat and wanting to know the secret of Mennonite success. Schoolmaster Richert, standing erect as one accustomed to authority, set his square jaw and answered with firm conviction: "It is because we plow the dew under. We get up early in the morning and start plowing the dew under and keep on plowing until the dew falls again at night."

It matters little that the schoolmaster and his people may not have realized they had something more than untiring industry; that it might have been more than accident their scouts had selected

the Kansas prairies because of their similarity in soil and climate to the steppes of Russia. What matters is that they sold their seed wheat and quietly themselves continued to "plow the dew under" until, in the short space of 35 years, Kansas became what Russia once was—the world's greatest producer of hard wheat. And now, in 1942, acres and acres of wheat fields throughout the Southwest, together with the resultant transportation system, the elevators, mills, and bakeries, stand as a monument to the initial impetus of their thrift, their tenacity, their refusal to violate a tenet of their faith.

"Plowing the dew under" was not just the Mennonite recipe for raising wheat. It was part of a religion in which personal industry was a cardinal Christian virtue. Just as energetically as they "plowed the dew under" on week days, they went to church on Sundays—not once, but three times: morning, afternoon, and night. No task was so great, no frontier hardship so heavy, but that there was time for young and old to "worship at the Master's feet."

Distances were great and transportation poor. Those who could rode in covered two-seated buggies with glass windows, or in green flaring wagons ornate with a profusion of blacksmith work, crude ox-carts, heavy lumber wagons, and even the mowing machines and grain drills. Those who couldn't ride walked—four or five miles to church. If the roads were muddy, they walked barefoot, carrying their shoes.

Their ministers, elected from the laity, served without pay. Honest, hard-working men, they knew little of theology; their sermons were straightforward exhortations on righteous living. Elder Wiebe or Elder Richert would preach on Sunday morning: "Yea, a man may say, thou hast faith and I have works: shew me thy

faith without thy works and I will shew you my faith by my works."

This faith, backed by eternal labor, furnished the driving power which in less than seventy years transformed the original settlement on the raw prairie into one of the finest rural sections of central Kansas. The community now centers around the hustling town of Newton, much of it Mennonite-owned. The farms of more than two-thirds of the 25,000 Mennonites living in the state lie within a radius of 45 miles from it. The same area includes more than a score of Kansas "small towns" where much of the business is also Mennonite-owned and operated, and contains more than sixty of the ninety-nine Mennonite churches in the state.

Institutions are the mark of man's progress. Three Mennonite colleges, three hospitals, and a home for the aged are tangible evidences of the Mennonite belief that the education of the young, the care of the sick and the helpless are church responsibilities. Each college has its own story of a rise through difficulties, but the Mennonites consider Bethel College at Newton their crowning achievement from an educational standpoint. Fifty years ago Bethel was one lone white limestone building on the bare and uninviting prairie. Today, the largest Mennonite college in America, it is nationally recognized.

Even though education has brought economic and social changes which have been impressive, religion still remains the core of the community. These modern young Mennonites, who speak English and look, dress, and act like other Americans, still turn out in full force on Sunday morning for church services. Increased population has brought increased church membership. The unpretentious churches, located for the most part on quiet country roads or near the smaller

towns, show record attendances with as much as ninety per cent of the membership out regularly for church and Sunday school—a contrast to other regions where country and village churches are struggling for existence.

The Mennonite church in America consists of seventeen branches, twelve of which are found in Kansas. The largest is the General Conference of Mennonite Churches in North America. More than half the Kansas Mennonites—some 12 or 15,000—belong to this most liberal wing of the church.

The Amish, of whom there are about 2,000 in the state, are an ultra-conservative group who still cling to many of their hereditary customs and ideas. Their neighborhood centers around the little village of Yoder. Because of their peculiar dress habits—the men wearing long chin whiskers and the women tiny bonnets, long-sleeved, high-necked dresses of drab colors—they attract much attention and it is often supposed they represent the typical Mennonites. As a group they view many of the modern conveniences as evidences of worldliness. Automobiles are banned and the Amish families ride to town in their old-fashioned buggies. Their community is characterized by an absence of church buildings. Services are held in the homes, a carry-over from the early days when, because of persecution, they were forced to hide in caves to worship. The more liberal Mennonites view the Amish tolerantly and respect their common church bond.

Today the little group at Yoder is facing a grave problem due to the war. The government has selected several sections of rich wheat land in the heart of the community as the site of a new naval air base. The Amish are troubled. "We don't know whether Christians can live near something like that," they say. They may decide to move.

Similarly, the world at war brings a serious challenge to all the Mennonites with their doctrine of non-resistance. They are reacting much as a group would be expected to react which for 400 years has clung to its belief through persecution and martyrdom. Theirs is an individualistic religion: each man's conscience will tell him what to do, and his decision will be respected.

Probably ninety per cent of the young men have registered as conscientious objectors, though some have entered non-combat service, and still others are bearing arms. "My belief is more than tradition," one boy told me. "It is everything I have been taught by my parents, my grandparents, and my minister. My grandfather's faith was strong. He walked ten miles to church on Sunday to preach a sermon without pay. My faith may not be like that—I ride to church in my car—but still I cannot deny what I believe."

Under the present selective service law the churches opposed to war—mostly the Mennonites, Quakers, and Brethren churches—set up and maintain civilian service camps where their young men do various types of constructive work. Most of the Kansas conscientious objectors have been sent to the camp at Colorado Springs where they do soil conservation work. These camps cost the government nothing. The Mennonite churches, for instance, give two dollars a year per church member to finance them. "We're glad to pay for them," they say. "We don't mind the money, though it will probably cost us a lot before it's over."

A few of the young men have joined the Army but are uneasy about it from a religious standpoint. "I am loyal to my country and I am not afraid to die," one told me, "but to me the whole war is wrong. Yet in case of actual invasion I could fight."

"If our young men do join the regular Army," said Dr. Kaufman, president of Bethel College, "we do not excommunicate them. We respect the decisions their consciences have made."

That the decisions are difficult and complicated by many factors is indicated by the words of one clear-eyed young woman. "Most of our people believe that to take a life is wrong," she said, "and that it is better to submit to injustice than to kill. I believe that, too. And so far as I am concerned personally, I could submit to injustice. But when I think of the horrible things that have been taught the youth of Germany, and when I feel that submission to injustice would mean my children would be taught things that would wreck their lives—then I could not submit." Tears came into her eyes. "Submission for myself—yes; but submission to something that would ruin my children for life—never!"

So, as it was with the Mennonites in Russia seventy years ago, it is now with Mennonite youth in America today. Now, as then, there is struggle. Now, as then, there will be those whose consciences can permit of compromise. For others no compromise will be possible and they will stand firm in their refusal to bear arms. And, in the face of national crisis and of overwhelming public opinion, who can say which decision calls for the greater courage?

So far, at any rate, the great American principle of religious freedom has not failed them—that principle which through many centuries has drawn to these shores the religiously oppressed of many lands.

Grace Cable Keroher is a graduate of the University of Kansas. The mother of two children, she still finds time to do extensive research into the history of Kansas' immigrant groups.

HE DREAMED AMERICA

KENT PELLETT

IN THE days of the American Revolution Thomas Paine dreamed of a world freed of the shackles of tyranny.

The farmers at Lexington "fired the shot heard round the world," but Paine, the first popular American writer, told them what they fired it for. His writings greatly inspired the Declaration of Independence; when the Revolution was in its darkest hour he wrote flaming words that gave the ragged American soldiers courage to achieve victory.

Not satisfied with being in the thick of one revolution, he took part in the French, and tried to drive the royalty out of England as well.

His reward? The English tried to hang him, the French to behead him. Even in the United States he was hooted and stoned. Americans thought so little of him they allowed his body to be taken overseas after his death.

Yet today all three countries would covet the honor of his dust—if his dust could be found.

Born at Thetford, England, in 1736, Tom Paine worked at various jobs, such as making corsets and collecting taxes, but he preferred to spend his time debating in the taverns. There, bold fellows were beginning to say that every man was the equal of every other man, an idea sure to be unpopular with the dukes and earls.

The American Revolution was really born in the taverns of old England. The wind generated there finally blew all the titles out of both America and France,

though, strangely enough, it was unable to dislodge the nobility in England.

One day all Paine's possessions were sold in the street for debt. Two days later his wife left him. After that, he shook the dust of England from his feet and came to America.

He found the colonies in a jangle with the mother country. The colonists were heatedly demanding their rights, but nobody had yet spoken the dreadful word "separation."

Tom boldly wrote a 47-page pamphlet demanding, "Throw off the shackles of tyranny. It is time to part." He signed it "Common Sense." Soon everybody in the colonies had a copy.

When the American Revolution was finally on the march, Paine gave what little money he had to the movement and joined Washington's army as a private. There he saw men in rags, dead men and wounded men, desertion and mutiny and starvation. Washington's army was falling to pieces.

Again he picked up his pen and wrote the immortal words: "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."

"Common Sense," as he preferred to be known, wrote pamphlet after pamphlet to brace the spirit of the soldiers, and General Washington had them read to the whole army.

When at last victory came and freedom

COMMON GROUND

was won, Paine laid down his pen. From a spider web he got the idea of an iron bridge to span the Schuylkill River. Promoters said they would build the bridge if French engineers, then the world's best, would approve the design. So Paine set out for France. After his bridge had been approved by the French Academy of Science, he went to England to see his 91-year-old mother.

Revolutionary talk had spread all over Europe. His pen began to itch. He took it in hand and wrote *The Rights of Man*, which sold a million and a half copies. He told Englishmen that if they would rid themselves of the King and establish a republic, they would at the same time rid themselves of poverty, high taxes, and a big army.

All England roared. Paine fled to France where he had been invited to have a hand in the French Revolution then under way.

The English stamped his initials, "T.P.," on their boot soles so they could walk on him, drew his picture with the ears of an ass on plates and beer mugs. And the official hangman burned all his books that could be found.

But in France there was a public dinner in his honor, with a royal salute and a parade of troops. Lafayette handed him the key to the Bastille, which had just fallen, to be given to George Washington. (The key now hangs on a peg at Mount Vernon.) He was elected to the French Assembly and took his seat.

But there he promptly got into trouble by trying to save the life of the King. When they voted on the question of beheading befuddled Louis XVI, Paine said, "We will kill the King, but save the man."

But heads were rolling too freely. The King's was chopped off, and Paine was ordered guillotined as well, for his stand. But by mistake the executioner failed to lead him forth to the chopping block. He

languished in jail for a year, improving his time by writing *The Age of Reason*, which made him more enemies, for the book attacked religious superstitions of the time.

After the French had ceased cutting off heads, Paine informed them he was still behind bars, and was liberated. He stayed a while in France, designing the first iron bridges in Europe, and writing poetry.

But the French, having been through revolution, war, and ruin like the modern Germans, set up a dictator, Napoleon Bonaparte, who started out to conquer the world. Paine liked dictators no better than kings. "I cannot live in the state of Bonaparte," he said, although Napoleon had suggested a statue of gold to him in every city of the world, and said that he always slept with a copy of *The Rights of Man* under his pillow.

Paine returned to America. Here he met a cool reception. He was variously accused of being an atheist, a drunkard, a crook, and an adulterer. This father of the Revolution was even refused the right to vote as an American citizen!

Although he had written the sublimest of creeds, "The world is my country, mankind are my friends, to do good is my religion," he was refused Christian burial.

Later, one William Cobbett removed his bones to England, intending to raise a great monument to him. But the idea was given up, the coffin and bones were acquired by a furniture dealer, and so lost forever.

But Tom Paine had dreamed America, and the dream lived.

Free lance writer and managing editor of The Soybean Digest (Iowa), Kent Pellett is at work on a series of brief sketches of the known and little-known people in our past who "dreamed America."

I, TOO, SING AMERICA

JO SINCLAIR

THERE is a street called Central Avenue which cuts through the dimly lit, squalid heart of the slums of Cleveland, Ohio. It is a Negro street. Its identification signs are beer joints and crumbling tenements, pawnshops, the home-relief station that is housed now in what used to be a branch office of the Cleveland Trust Company.

On hot summer nights the police cars cruise there watchfully, the thousand black kids turn to stick out their tongues at the cops, the men and women continue to walk and lounge, and the Negro laughter and curses rise rich and heavy toward the bits of sky between the close-packed roofs and chimneys. The doors of the small churches are open for the congregations to get some of whatever air has drifted into the Avenue between the ancient stone and steel. Once these were stores—a grocery, a confectionery, once in the “palmy” days of this neighborhood a dry-goods store; now they are the homes of the True Faith Baptist, the Jesus Only Church.

On these nights song flows out of them to mix with the laughter and curses, the shrill frail sound of children who cannot sleep in the furnace-like tenements: “Steal away, steal away! Steal away to Jesus!”

It is difficult to see the stars on Central. The ceiling is too low; the electric signs flash off and on, off and on, obscuring the view: BAR B-Q, DRINKS, LOANS MADE HERE, DINE AND DANCE. A hot wind drifts into the street and the young boys

walk restlessly and sullenly; the girls break into sudden dance steps, in their hearts a tormented music.

This is the street where the battered, magical walls of Karamu House rise above the tenements—a fantastic, beautiful House within the core of industrial America.

Here Negro men and women and youths present *Porgy and Emperor Jones*. Here a group of Negro dancers rehearse for the recital they will give at the Institute of Music. They dance a poem by Archibald MacLeish—*The Western Sky*. One of the stanzas says:

*Be proud to bear
The endless labor of the free—
To strike for freedom everywhere
And everywhere bear liberty.*

In the crafts studio boys and girls are working at lithographs and prints, or at metal trays, jewelry, bookends. And in still another room the Karamu Chorus is rehearsing for its monthly concert.

Karamu, which started purely as a neighborhood house, has become famous as America's foremost Negro art center. The community soil has been turned with four singular spades—music, dance, pictorial and plastic arts, and theatre—and the upturned earth steams with richness and fertility. The Gilpin Players of Karamu Theatre, for example, are known as America's oldest and finest Negro theatre group. The Karamu Dancers at the New York World's Fair excited top newspaper and public comment and finally were photographed for Life Magazine as

COMMON GROUND

the exponents of a unique American art. The Karamu Artists have been shown at Cleveland's own art museum and in competitive exhibits throughout the country, achieving even the International Print Show and one-man shows at the Associated American Artists in New York and the Sullivan Memorial Library at Temple University in Philadelphia. As for the fourth shining spade, Karamu singing permeates the neighborhood. It rings through Porgy and is echoed in the twisted, crumbling houses up and down the street, where the women stand in their kitchens near stove or sink. It follows the men to factory or WPA job, the kids to school; it drifts for hours over the sidewalks, between pawnshop and home-relief office.

Karamu is a word taken from the Swahili, the most widely used African language. It means "place of feasting and enjoyment." It may also mean "center of the community." Russell and Rowena Jelliffe, the directors of the House, like both translations, for Karamu is both these things to Central. Karamu is art (without the capital A), which people can take out of themselves and use as food and drink. Karamu is people, and the Jelliffes have been very close to people for more than twenty-five years, ever since they founded this House. Today they have some 2,200 people to be close to. The narrow, low-ceilinged rooms are clamorous and alive with voice and laughter, with the excited eyes, the quick or stumbling gestures of the people of Central Avenue.

"There are about 800 adults coming to Karamu," Russell Jelliffe says. His eyes crinkle at the corners and his hand goes up to greet a boy who rushes by, carrying a poster. "The rest are—young."

Rowena Jelliffe's eyes have the crinkling habit, too. There is a same keenness to their eyes, a same alertness. The man is

tall, the wife slight, but there is a startling quality of resemblance between the two faces, as if the warmth stemmed from a single, powerful source.

They met as freshmen at Oberlin College. Later they both won scholarships to the School of Civics of Chicago University, and for a year worked side by side in the slums of Chicago—at Hull House, at Chicago Commons, and other settlements. From the very beginning they shared a love for people. "It was natural," Rowena Jelliffe says, smiling. "Both Russell's father and mine, and their fathers before them, spent their lives working for the building of their country. Of course Russell and I grew up with that same impulse. When we met at school, we discovered we wanted to do the same kind of work."

When in 1915 the Second Presbyterian Church in Cleveland began an intensive campaign and set aside a sum of money for the betterment of the Negro neighborhood which had recently sprung up close to the church, Russell and Rowena Jelliffe were asked for their help. The board was very vague as to what they meant by "betterment." A Bible class, a settlement, anything; the Jelliffes could take their pick. They did; they picked one of their shining dreams. Though the sum of money was small, Russell and Rowena opened a community house in the very center of the Negro section.

They found one of the old, old houses of the city, built in Civil War days, and established headquarters there. To top things off, they moved in—and lived there fourteen years, until they were crowded out by Central Avenue itself, which took to pushing harder and harder at Karamu doors as time went on.

The early years of Karamu were the war years, the years of the great mass migration of Southern Negroes, when Northern industry needed men so desper-

I, TOO, SING AMERICA

ately it offered railroad fare to as many Negroes as would come. There was one period when the Negro population in the district doubled within three months. There were not enough houses; only the unfamiliar cold and ice, the vast stretches of city street between home and job. It was a period of terror in the hearts of the strangers. But there was Karamu House, to help.

The Jelliffes knew some of the reasons that had dragged the Southern Negro

knocked hesitantly at the doors of the House.

"Why I come? For the education of my children. Yeah, that's why I come."

As long as twenty years afterward the answer was still the same. After a Baptist Church convention in Cleveland a few years ago, Mrs. Jelliffe found herself behind an old Negro woman. Walking slowly along the street, looking to left and to right, she was exclaiming over and over: "Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"

"That sermon we just heard must have moved you hard," Rowena Jelliffe said.

"Honey," the old woman cried, her face radiant, "I ain't hallelujah-ing that sermon. No, ma'am! I'm hallelujah-ing this great, big wonderful city. Where I can go down to the five-and-ten-cent store and buy me a sandwich. Where me and the kids can get us on a bus and just ride and ride. Honey, this great, big, beautiful city! Hallelujah!"

In the early days of Karamu there was not too much music, no time or strength for painting or stage design. The Jelliffes' days were crammed with the basic need to acclimatize the strangers, to teach them the ways of stone and steel after the cotton and the slow warm mores of the South, to teach a people how much to pay for a loaf of bread and a pound of meat, how to find and use schools, clinics, hospitals.

But it was a time for dreams, too. One boy came shyly to Russell Jelliffe and told him he had been going downtown every night.

"Why?" Jelliffe asked.

The boy's eyes glowed in the remembrance. "Just to look at the lights," he said. "And to walk on the sidewalks."

Those were the years when the Jelliffes clung closely to the settlement ways with which they were familiar. They used the usual games and athletics as supplementary activities, trying to clear more and



toward the strange North. They knew of the little nameless fears, the utter lack of security. But what reason was powerful enough to make people forsake all that was familiar, to move their lives and their memories, their past and future?

"Why did you come North?" they asked of the men and women who

more space as Central Avenue grew, and as the people of the side streets heard of Karamu and came through the open doors to see and hear what was going on.

This is where the real story of Karamu House begins. Rowena and Russell Jelliffe suddenly were made aware of art. The word practically bounced off the heads of the people jammed in the House and struck the directors between the eyes. They saw it in faces and heard it in voices. Feet tapped it out. The art of people who lived and shouted the word every time they moved, in almost everything they did.

The Jelliffes began to watch. They began to feel an eagerness. They saw that games and athletics did not really fill the hands of the people. They saw men and women making shy efforts to decorate the walls of the House. Child after child broke into dance steps as quickly as into laughter. People "made believe" through the day, as if they were acting out delicious little plots with themselves. It was as though the House contained a thousand seething little centers of music and drama and dancing.

There was only one "natural and next" step. "We're going to experiment," Rowena Jelliffe said firmly to her husband. "With theatre—first."

She nodded, as his eyebrows went up. "I know," she said. "I don't know anything about theatre. All right, I'll learn along with the people."

So the Jelliffes started a children's theatre at Karamu. Before they could take a really deep breath, it was such a success the older youths and adults were roaring for a theatre of their own.

They got it. And within a few years Cleveland was coming down to the slums to see productions of plays written by top American playwrights. Within a few more years, America was beginning to hear about an extraordinary Negro acting

group with its own theatre, a group putting on plays in competition with downtown theatres and actually making money at it.

Students and director learned at the same time, from the same trial and error. And one day, not too many years from the humble beginning, the story went like this: The Karamu Theatre presents *Scarlet Sister Mary*, directed by Rowena Jelliffe (program printed by Karamu; play designed, costumed, lighted, and acted by Karamu).

That was the start of the famous Gilpin Players and, at the same moment, the beginning of Karamu's famous program of welfare-via-the-arts. "It was a natural flowering," Mrs. Jelliffe says, her eyes glowing. "They are born singers and dancers, you see. And of course the gayety, the humor, the abandon of the Negroes are things that are very basic to America. They have the blessed capacity to laugh—at themselves, and with people."

The Central Avenue laughter is a rich kind, good to hear. Perhaps it is rich because it contains a knowledge of pain, of poverty and need, as well as a great, reaching desire for life. It is the kind of laughter that can climb the high city walls and wander over the prairies, into the well-kept fruit and vegetable gardens, into the streets full of house upon house of people—and make America laugh.

Nothing happened too easily or too soon. The new group went along haphazardly, very much an average little theatre group, until the evening when the late Charles Gilpin came to see them perform. Gilpin, one of the great Negro actors of all time, was making a Cleveland appearance in *Emperor Jones*.

After their performance, Gilpin spoke to them. "Why don't you take yourselves seriously and really do something?" he said. "Make this a real Negro theatre,

I, TOO, SING AMERICA

maybe the best in the world. If there aren't plays, get somebody to write them." Then he wrote a check for fifty dollars to prove his point.

The group named themselves the Gilpin Players of Karamu and immediately went to work. They gave performances wherever there was a chance of getting people together—in barns, in poolrooms, in beer halls. They made their own costumes and scenery, designed their own sets, spread their own publicity. They saved every cent. Eventually they got their own theatre.

They made it themselves, out of an old abandoned poolroom in a building next door to the House. They started with not more than a shoestring, and made themselves the sturdiest of boots in which to walk the world. All God's chillun got shoes! But the Gilpins went barefoot a long time first. They got seats for the theatre, for example, by buying (on credit) the pews of a nearby church. The first night's performance paid for half these seats; they paid for the other half by the end of that first season. Reflectors were made of five-gallon alcohol tins they begged from the neighborhood bootleggers. A number of the more talented members spent weeks in the Cleveland Public Library studying African designs, then painted the striking motifs on burlap: first-night audiences exclaimed over the "fine tapestries" on the walls of the tiny, new theatre.

Today, after nineteen years of continuous play production, with a record of close to one hundred and fifty different plays, the "Gilps" are real American theatre. The only subsidy they ever had was Charles Gilpin's fifty-dollar check. Since then, the theatre has carried all expenses of rent, light, heat, insurance, and production costs. Their real subsidy has been Gilpin's words: "Learn to see the drama

in your own lives, and some day the world will come to see you."

To their productions of plays by O'Neill, Countee Cullen, Paul Green, Ridgely Torrence, the Heywards, Langston Hughes, have come eager audiences not only from Cleveland but from the entire state of Ohio. Often there are visitors from other states, and scores of requests have come for them to go on tour. Playwrights from all over the country, both Negro and white, have written scripts for Karamu. Especially is it an outlet for Negro authors, the eager youngsters who are writing of their own people and their problems.

Notable among writers of originals for the Gilpins is Langston Hughes. An old friend of the Jelliffes and a former "student" of Karamu, Hughes lived in Cleveland a number of years and was graduated from Central High School. Many of his now famous poems and blues were written in Cleveland, and several of his plays have a Central Avenue setting. Five of them had their world premieres at Karamu Theatre.

Three other dramatic groups have developed at the House. The Robeson players and the Harrison Players specialize in social- and living-newspaper drama, and direct their material particularly at the people who come to Karamu to work and play. The Taylor Players are blind men and women who learn their parts in Braille and who are in great demand, especially by church and lodge groups. Besides, Karamu Theatre, which sprang out of sheer experiment, is today giving assistance to various little groups now attempting to rise out of similar circumstances and in the same ways throughout the country. They are doing a good job of helping. They are noted for good jobs; several "Gilps" have gone into professional theatre, so good has been the job.

COMMON GROUND

One experiment often will give vent to others, if the "scientists" are eager enough. Karamu has been eager for twenty-five years, and the experiments have popped like firecrackers across Central Avenue.

The one that produced the now famous Karamu Dancers came about very simply. The Gilpins put on a play that called for dancers. "We need dancers!" they cried, looking around their world.

So there were dancers! A small group started in the usual Karamu way. Talent was discovered; the group grew steadily in size and art. After all, Central Avenue loved to dance, as well as sing.

It is what many critics have called "unique dancing." The dark, strong, rich bodies attempt to interpret an entire race; the steps and gestures speak of Africa, the deep South, the strange cold North; arms and legs beat out a music of weariness, trouble, work, hope. Lord, Lord, I got a pain in my soul! Lord, Lord, I'm gonna work my way clean to heav'n! The shadows of the dancers stretch long and beautiful with movement into the houses on Central Avenue. They drift over the roofs of the broken houses of the side streets, and take their dark, live steps into the clean and lovely houses at the other end of the city. They bridge the tremendous gulf between Central and the Heights, making a series of subtle gradations between the colors of black and white.

The Dancers write much of their own choreography now, and several compose music for the group just as some of the Gilpins have written original plays and skits for themselves. Often dancing what they call "primitives" and "history pieces," they experiment with each different dance, sometimes emerging with something intensely exciting. This is what happened with *The Western Sky*. MacLeish wrote the poem after listening

to the broadcast of a speech by Winston Churchill. When the Dancers ran across it in a magazine, they decided to make a dance to the simple rhythm of the poem itself, the powerful stark words and the visionary idea. But then they felt the dance must have music. The cycle was completed quite simply, in Karamu fashion: Walter Anderson, once of the House and now teaching at one of the country's colleges, was asked for help. He wrote the music the group now uses. Always the story must ring true—if they have to write the music of portrayal themselves.

Around the first experiment of the theatre, then, have swirled the natural experiments touched off by a living, vital need. "We must have scenery," cried the Gilpins. "We need costumes. We need small objects made of stone, painted pictures, decorated walls. We need."

So the Karamu people began painting, designing sets and costumes. Now they were creating lithographs, oils, and prints fine enough to be placed on exhibit in museums far from the crumbling dust of Central Avenue.

To the theatre were added the little arts and crafts workshop next door, and, next door to that, a tiny exhibit-and-salesroom, named Bokari—the Swahili word for "market place." Cleveland came to buy the products of Karamu art. At intermission time and after the play, audiences wandered into the Bokari room and picked up the trays, the jewelry; saw they were fine and beautiful. They bought and took the beautiful things home, to place them in rooms far from Central.

Art, especially the Central kind, must be fed constantly or it becomes lifeless. At Karamu the arts program is supplemented by a parallel program of what is called "natural" club groups. The growing, developing individual is the important thing at the House, not the skill; and yet it has followed that a high degree of

I, TOO, SING AMERICA

skill in the arts has grown along with the people. Karamu's people work as members of a group, not as isolated individuals. The club activities pour a constant stream of life into the music, acting, singing, and varied arts; and the four spades that turn an American soil are kept shining with the vitality and strength of people working together.

So it has come about that there are labor study groups at Karamu who try honestly to fit their studies to the needs of the working people of Central. And perhaps a dance will spring up to interpret this.

The Senior Mothers' Club studies food and living prices, investigates neighborhood movies, playgrounds, hospital facili-

ties. Along with the dancing and painting there are camping, hikes, trips. And one keeps the other warm and healthy.

The boys at Karamu have a slang phrase for anyone who doesn't know what is going on in the world. "Aw," they say, "he don't know what time it is!"

The people at the House are always trying to find out "what time it is." They try in characteristic ways. The Gilpin Players saved \$1,500, then bought African art objects and ethnological material and presented them to the Cleveland Museum of Art and to the Museum of Natural History. And again, when they earned and saved more money, they established a scholarship at the Cleveland School of



ties. The women exchange information and help: a visit to the Mothers' Club at Hull House in Chicago was an experience that stimulated both groups. And perhaps a play will be written around some of this, and acted out on the tiny Karamu stage.

So, along with the singing, there is the social education that uses the community as a textbook. Along with the theatre there are community organizations and

Art, for the use of talented Negro students.

What time is it, Central? Two large windows of the House, facing on the Avenue, have been given over to two 5 x 7-foot placards. The week's news—clipped from a wide range of newspapers and periodicals—is posted, captioned, and presented via these placards in such a way that thousands of street wanderers stop

COMMON GROUND

to read during the day and evening. Find out "the time" for yourself, Central!

Twenty-five years is a long hour in the life of a neighborhood—long enough and deep enough for Karamu to begin to tell the story of the Negro to America.

It is the story of the Negro told first of all to the Negro, and then through him to all the country. How he came before his community and his nation bearing gifts in his hands. How always before this he had lived and worked in narrow corners away from the main highway that surges through the heart of America; how those dark, isolated corners had given him a feeling of separateness from the rest of the American people.

Karamu is the story of how the Negro stepped at last out of the dead-end streets onto the main highway, his hand outstretched not to ask for something, but to give—a gift so real, so challenging, it catapulted him into the thick of the crowd. Now he was walking in the center of the main road, surrounded by the rest of the people, as anonymous as they, yet as individualistic as they.

"This is mine," he was saying with dignity and joy, as he opened his hands to show his gift. "I bring this—it is my best."

Langston Hughes has cried out:

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.

They send me to eat in the kitchen

When company comes,

But I laugh,

And eat well,

And grow strong.

Tomorrow,

I'll sit at the table

When company comes.

Nobody'll dare

Say to me,

"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am.
And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

Karamu House is now tied closely, in living affiliations, with all of the city. They are solid, working affiliations with such major institutions in Cleveland as the Museum of Art, the Institute of Music, the Museum of Natural History, Western Reserve University, and the Cleveland Play House. Exchange education and help: the lines reach out from Central Avenue into a thousand streets—bridges, over which walk people of all kinds and all colors.

At the twenty-fifth anniversary luncheon of Karamu House, more than 600 of Cleveland's civic and cultural leaders gathered to honor an ideal that had stepped from the slum darkness of their city into the light of nation-wide recognition.

Paul Green, the noted playwright, in addressing this distinguished gathering, gave the simple strong keynote of the Karamu song. "The Jelliffes," he said, "are among the great dreamers of America, those pioneers who dreamed American Independence—and the Constitution."

The song of democracy, poets have called it.

In January of this year, work by the Karamu Artists was shown at the Associated American Artists in New York City. The honorary chairman of the exhibit was Eleanor Roosevelt. Dorothy Maynor was chairman. The list of sponsors included Marshall Field, Langston Hughes, Mrs. James Weldon Johnson, Ethel Waters, Marian Anderson, Louis Bromfield, and Mrs. Edith J. R. Isaacs. For the three-week period of the show,

I, TOO, SING AMERICA

New York's crowds came to see the lithography, etchings, sculpture, jewelry, water colors, and oils. Now Central Avenue and Fifth Avenue stood side by side.

I, too, am America.

On an October night in 1939 there was a fire at Karamu House. In the morning, Central Avenue woke up to find its theatre had been destroyed. The tapestries they had made by hand were burned, the little stage caved in; the seats which had once been church pews were bits of charred wood.

Something quite wonderful happened.

All the bridges Karamu House had erected, all the lines they had thrown out over their city, all the trays and bookends, the pictures and lithographs that were now in homes even in far parts of the country—all these suddenly worked.

The Cleveland Play House cleared their smaller stage, the Brooks Theatre, and invited Karamu Theatre to help itself. Western Reserve University opened the doors of its Eldred Theatre for Karamu's second play of the season. And plans were under way to take the third to Oberlin College.

Almost as suddenly, Cleveland was paying close attention to things it had not

noticed for twenty-five years. It was finding out, all at once, that Karamu House had worked and lived with amazing accomplishment in an altogether inadequate home. Cleveland and a thousand or more friends all over America were now made painfully aware that Karamu had done a proud, good job despite the fire hazards of its walls and roofs, despite its outmoded, worn facilities, its makeshift, crowded quarters.

Now, this year, a new Karamu House will be built. Friends throughout the country are helping raise the \$500,000 needed to build and endow fireproof buildings, dignified clean walls, adequate working facilities. The song encompasses all the nation now. And Karamu House, which sprang from the slums of a great industrial city and was nourished by the beauty a people took from their daily living, will be rebuilt with the aid of those who have shared its gifts—the people of America.

Jo Sinclair is a young Cleveland writer already familiar to readers of this magazine for her story "Red Necktie."

The illustrations are by E. W. Brown, one of the Karamu artists.

• From the Immigrant and Negro Press •

INDEPENDENCE DAY—1942

(An editorial from the July 4 Manzanar Free Press, Manzanar Relocation Center, Owens Valley, California.)

FOURTH OF JULY this year will have poignant meaning and value for an America gripped in a death struggle for the very principles affirmed in the Declaration of Independence.

For American citizens of Japanese ancestry, herded into camps and guarded by the bayoneted sentries of their own country, it will be a doubly strange and bewildering day. For they remember too well the carefree Fourth of last year, when they stood along Broadway to cheer the Nisei soldiers who marched shoulder to shoulder with American soldiers of all races.

But let us think twice, lest in our understandable and human bitterness we dismiss this day with an ironic shrug and a customary wisecrack.

It is too late to argue on the injustice of this gigantic upheaval that finds us today in Manzanar. Our leaders had re-

peatedly reiterated our willingness to evacuate our homes should it ever be considered a military necessity. Now we are here.

Let us stop living in a dreamy, nostalgic past. Let us stop wallowing in a mire of self-pity and work out our destinies in a practical manner.

We Nisei have temporarily put our individual freedoms on ice so that national morale might remain sound, and the fight for world democracy might continue unfettered. Of all diverse American groups, we are in the best position to appreciate the blessings of liberty.

For those whose faith in America burned bright—who were eager to give their blood to prove that faith—this is a difficult test, a Valley Forge.

On the day that the gates of Manzanar open wide for us again, let us step out into a victorious America more vigilant and jealous of the independence we have regained through patient co-operation and waiting.

FREEDOM FOR ALL PEOPLES

(The Arabic newspapers in Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine carried special Fourth of July supplements containing greetings from representative Americans of Arabic-speaking stock. The following is that sent by George M. Barakat, President of the Syrian-Lebanese American Federation of the Eastern

States, as translated in the July 14, 1942 Federation Herald, an English-language monthly published in Boston by the Federation and edited by Mr. Barakat.)

ONE hundred and sixty-six years ago to-day America resolved both to be free and to share that freedom with all humanity.

FROM THE IMMIGRANT AND NEGRO PRESS

To her welcoming shores have since come millions of men and women from all over the world; and America has opened her heart to them. And here together they have grown and prospered. Today in the dark hour of her need, these new Americans stand ready to make any and every sacrifice necessary for the preservation of the American way of life which is so dear to them.

And what is this American way of life? It is a way of life based upon the fundamental principle that all men are entitled to the blessings of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Here in America there is no compulsion to conform to any dictated cultural pattern of a "superior race." Here we have a nation made up of many nations, where each racial group is encouraged to retain and develop the best elements in its cultural heritage, in order that its contribution might help to enrich the new American civilization in the making.

Today, old and new-stock Americans make another resolve: a resolve to make the world free for all men everywhere.

And they make this pledge, not only because they believe that free men must shoulder the responsibilities and perform the duties of free men, but also because they are firmly convinced of the proposition that the maintenance of their own freedom will in a very large measure depend upon the establishment and maintenance of real freedom for all peoples throughout the world.

It is for these reasons that we have faith and confidence that America, together with the Allied Nations, will see this fight through, and that after its successful conclusion, America will insist upon the establishment, everywhere, of genuine democratic governments based upon the consent of the majority of the people concerned.

As one of the representatives of more than a quarter of a million Americans of Arabic-speaking stock, we ask our blood and cultural kinsmen throughout the Arabic-speaking world to have faith in America; faith in her ability and willingness to see to it that justice and fair play is meted out to them in the post-war settlement.

WHAT CAN I DO?

(A letter from a white soldier, published in the July 11, 1942 Pittsburgh Courier, important Negro weekly.)

Dear Sir:

I have long felt a friendly and sympathetic interest in the Negro and his future in America. . . .

I am interested in finding out what part white friends of the Negro can and should play in furthering the fair claims of that long abused minority.

I cannot endow schools or hire men. I'm pretty small change, but I'm anxious

to do what I can. I never miss the opportunity to correct erroneous and harmful impressions held by members of both races, when talking will do the job. Sometimes it does; sometimes it is useless. We both know there is a long educational process on both sides of the artificial fence, before the fence will collapse of its own dead-weight.

Through my father's contacts with Howard University, while he was in Congress, I had the pleasure of meeting men like Dr. Mordecai Johnson.

When I think of that great man and

COMMON GROUND

what he has done and is doing, it seems an impertinence from an outsider to offer my two cents worth.

Most of my contacts with your people have been through the entertainment field. Writing for the trade magazine *Down Beat*, and occasionally doing a bit of booking, I made some very pleasant acquaintances.

Meeting an artist and gentleman of the great merit of Jimmy Noone is a pleasure mixed with regret; regret that such talent has received so little recognition in any race other than his own.

True, the hep-cats and hot-fans know his fine work and admire it, but that is not always the most flattering attention. It is shallow and fleeting.

What I was starting to say—having met men of such high calibre, calling some “friend,” I’d feel low indeed to stand idly by if there was anything I could do to battle the mass of prejudices and correct the abuses that abound in relations between the black and white.

Judging from what I read in the well-written words of Odum, the Army life is much improved for the Negro. Thank God for that. We do progress, even though slowly.

I’m writing you, the *Courier*, considered by many as the voice of the race, as a logical source of guidance.

My talents and training are limited. The greater part of my experience has been on newspapers, large and small, city daily and country weeklies. I was just getting a start in the booking business when the Nipponese and Nazis upset the world’s equilibrium and changed my mind.

Along with quite a few other fellows, I’m now wearing O.D. and Government issue. It isn’t a bad Army and I’m getting a lot out of my service in it. But, when this row is over, I hope to be among those coming back and I want to be ready to make what I’m coming back to better.

I want to see us more closely approach genuine democracy. And that certainly includes judging men on their merits, not their color.

Sincerely,

LOUIS K. CRAMTON

ASN 36112194, Battery B-210CA,
Seattle, Washington.

In reply to Private Cramton, P. L. Prattis, Executive Editor of the *Courier*, wrote: “While you are in the Army, certainly the most you can do is to stick steadfastly to your beliefs in humanity as a whole. You will render great service if you can convince as few as six other men that it is worth while for them to die to guarantee freedom to the Chinese, the Indians, or the Negro. Our men in the fighting forces must have a belief in the cause for which we fight. That belief must not be restricted by race or color if we as a nation are to survive.”

And to COMMON GROUND Mr. Prattis writes: “My reply to Mr. Cramton was influenced by the fact that he is not a civilian and not an Army officer. He is, however, in the Army. I believe he could do much more as a civilian and much more as an Army officer. But I am a great believer in the value and influence of an individual who is willing to be right at all times, among friends and foes. It sometimes requires greater courage to take the right stand among two or three of one’s friends than to say the right thing before the hundreds in a more or less friendly audience.

“What I am asking Mr. Cramton to do is to convert to the cause of freedom for ALL humanity the man who eats next to him, the man who sleeps next to him, the man who drills next to him, his pals and buddies who do not believe. I think that is a big job.”

• Organizations and Their Work •

THE AMERICAN COMMON

THE Common Council for American Unity has announced the formation of a center to be known—after the fashion of the village common of Colonial times—as the American Common. It will be a place where Americans of all backgrounds and races may come together to get better acquainted, exchange ideas, listen to informative talks, discuss common problems, enjoy music and other forms of artistic creation.

“The American Common,” according to the Council’s announcement, “will consciously foster understanding and co-operation between citizens of different backgrounds, an interchange of cultural experience and appreciation. It will be a place where white and colored, where those whose ancestors landed at Plymouth Rock and those whose parents, or who themselves stepped ashore at Ellis Island, meet as equal partners—a place where democracy is not so much preached as practiced.”

Mr. Robert D. Kohn of the Common Council’s Board of Directors is chairman and Mrs. Hjordis Swenson secretary of the Organizing Committee. The Common is partially an outgrowth of the American Scandinavian Center, organized by Mrs. Swenson two years ago, to do for the Scandinavian groups in New York City what the American Common plans to do for persons of every nationality and race.

The Common plans to present programs that will increase the appreciation not only of the many groups who have contributed to our American way of life, but of the uniqueness, power, and nobility of America itself. They will include

a series of meetings and round-table discussions, centering on the cultural backgrounds and contributions of the different groups in our population, the workings of American democracy, and problems of civilian defense and post-war society; concerts, recitals, and dramatic programs illustrating the music and arts of different peoples; art exhibits, informal social gatherings, and radio broadcasts. The Common hopes also to provide services such as a Concert and Speakers’ Bureau to assist in arranging intercultural programs, an Information Center about nationality and ethnic groups, and a Reading Room emphasizing intercultural publications and materials.

“Democracy has no worse enemy than segregation,” the Council’s announcement pointed out in outlining plans for programs and activities. “The isolation of group from group is harmful to that real unity which is more important today than ever before. The war has made us realize that if we are really to create a new world, we must reach out beyond our old habits and horizons. We cannot fashion a society in which all the varied elements even of our American population will find scope and incentive and freedom, unless each group knows and appreciates more than its own background and viewpoints.”

Members of the Common Council and subscribers to COMMON GROUND are urged to visit the Common and attend its programs while in New York. Temporary quarters are at 46 West 52nd Street. The permanent address may be had after September first by calling the offices of the Common Council.

• News Notes •

Under the direction of Mrs. John C. Baker, the Westport, Connecticut, branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, recently staged a "living" COMMON GROUND.

The program was successful in bringing together old stock and new, white and colored. Acts were presented in the guise of animated manuscripts submitted for editorial consideration, and included skits, poetry, music, and tableaux. In some cases articles which have already appeared in COMMON GROUND were used: "Town Meeting" adapted Harriette Wilbur's account, revolving it around the local Westport garbage-disposal problem; while Mataileen Ramsdell's "Learning Must Be Motivated" was dramatized directly. A one-act play, "The Open Door," written for the occasion by a Westport resident, John Ward Bayly, appears in this issue. Tableau illustrations for the magazine brought in local Hungarian, Russian, Dutch, and Italian American talent in song and folk dance.

Van Wyck Brooks and Langston Hughes participated as advisory editors, Mr. Hughes also reading from his poems, and Mr. Brooks presenting a condensation of Satoko Murakami's "I Am Alive."

Readers who would like to attempt something similar may obtain mimeographed copies of the editorial continuity from the COMMON GROUND office.

In Tucson, Arizona, Ada Pierce McCormick, one of COMMON GROUND's staunchest friends, has demonstrated that what one person does in a democracy can be important and effective.

Tucson, 100 miles away but the nearest sizable city to Fort Huachuca where

10,000 Negro troops are stationed, had been proposed as the site of a U.S.O. center to be paid for out of U.S.O. funds, collected nationally from Negroes as well as whites. The city voted it down. They also voted down a second proposal, which would have provided the Negro soldiers with little more than a washroom and a place to eat a sandwich.

Burning with indignation, Mrs. McCormick wrote an Open Letter to the citizens of Tucson in the form of an advertisement in one of the daily papers—to the effect that "if we betray our colored soldiers, we will send each one out with a drop of poison and despair in his heart. We will be doing what Hitler wants so much for us to do, dividing ourselves." She attached a ballot. The response was immediate, the decision was reversed, and the small recreation center became a reality.

Phi Delta Kappa, national professional educational fraternity, has voted to remove racial discrimination from its constitution. As a protest against the "white clause," Sigma Chapter at Ohio State University in August 1940 initiated a Negro and a Chinese, and as a result was suspended from the fraternity. Dissatisfied with the subsequent vote of the National Council in December to sustain the "white clause," the Columbia University Chapter in February set up a committee to campaign nationally for its repeal. Now, by a referendum vote of the 92 chapters of the fraternity, the "white clause" is removed and the Ohio State Chapter restored to good standing.

An attempt in late June to force Senate consideration of the Stewart Bill (S.

2293), which would have enabled the Secretary of War to take into custody and intern in concentration camps every American citizen of Japanese descent in the United States or its possessions, was blocked by the efforts of Senators Murdock, D., Utah; Ball, R., Minnesota; Taft, R., Ohio; and Clark, D., Idaho.

Said Senator Murdock: "All the information I have been able to obtain with respect to the relocation of persons of Japanese descent is that it is proceeding very satisfactorily and that the American citizens of Japanese descent are acquiescing in the program and going into the camps wherever they are established, without any objection, without any protests, and without any adverse exhibition of any kind.

"I think we are treading on very dangerous ground when we pass a bill of this kind, when, in my opinion, there is no necessity for it, and when no request has been made for it by responsible executive heads."

Senator Ball pointed out that if the Senate agreed to "putting 100,000 American citizens into concentration camps without hearings or anything else" the step would rival actions of totalitarian countries.

A suit to bar all persons of Japanese ancestry from voting, brought by John T. Regan, secretary of the Native Sons of the Golden West, through the former Attorney General of California, U. S. Webb, was dismissed by Federal Court in San Francisco, July 2, "because," wrote Federal Judge A. F. St. Sure, "the sole question it presents to this court is one which has been definitely decided by the Supreme Court of the United States."

The Aufbau, German-language weekly of New York City, calls upon its readers

to place at the disposition of the government whatever knowledge they have of "ersatz" materials. Here, it says, is a chance for "enemy aliens" to be of real use in the war effort. It urges that samples of such materials and apparatus which refugees may have brought with them from Germany be sent in to the Aufbau "War Museum," where they will be at the disposal of the authorities: substitute corks or stoppers, cellulose products, toilet articles and household utensils made either entirely or in part of substitute materials, buttons, cardboard clips, etc. Letters about experiences with "ersatz" goods are also desired.

When the Army needed Dee Hennington's 100-acre farm for building Camp Swift, Texas, the 100-year-old ex-slave told Army officers: "You tell me this country is fighting to free slaves in other countries? Then you can have my land and whatever else of mine you want. I know what it is to be a slave and what it is for this government to free slaves. I'll give my home and my farm and anything I own because slavery is wrong.

"President Lincoln freed me," he went on, "and President Roosevelt is going to free other slaves. The little I can do is mighty small, but I'm glad and proud to be able to do something to show I appreciate the freedom this country gave me and to make certain my grandchildren and their children will never be slaves."

Under the sponsorship of the American Friends Service Committee, a National Student Relocation Council has been organized to facilitate the release and transfer to inland universities and colleges of the more than 2,000 Nisei college students now in assembly and relocation centers. Working with the War Department and the War Relocation Authority,

COMMON GROUND

the Council, under the chairmanship of Robbins W. Barstow, President of the Hartford Seminary Foundation, is making contacts with Eastern colleges and planning a campaign to raise funds for a scholarship program. Under the circumstances, the number of students permitted to transfer immediately or for the fall term will probably be limited to those with adequate funds and scholarships.

Commenting editorially on the responsibilities that will be the students' who benefit from this plan, the Santa Anita Pacemaker says: "Each of the students entering school in the East, where Japanese Americans have been rare, will be the cynosure of many eyes. Upon their scholarship, their conduct, their thoughts, their sense of humor, their adaptability, will rest the verdict of the rest of the country as to whether Japanese Americans are true Americans. So, upon these students will be the onus of proving to people to whom they are strangers that the first word in 'Japanese American' is merely an adjective describing the color of our skin—not the color of our beliefs."

The Folk Festival for Freedom on July 4th in Bridgeport, Connecticut, drew on the talents of the diverse new-immigrant groups in the city's population to demonstrate the color, vitality, and harmonious strength within such diversity when harnessed to similar ends. Widely featured as "an answer to the Axis," it was sponsored by the The Sunday Herald, Radio Station WICC, and the International Institute, and attracted a crowd of 10,000 spectators.

The University of Kansas has undertaken a linguistic survey of the state to determine the geographical location and

extent, stability and social position of all groups in Kansas which speak or in the past have spoken languages other than English, and to study the present state of the foreign languages in such areas, as well as the English language, to determine to what extent, if any, it has been affected by the original tongue of the immigrants.

Each year the Wellesley College Department of Sociology conducts a project aimed to acquaint its graduates with one of the newer immigrant groups in the United States. Last year's study focused on the Armenian American community of Boston. Wellesley girls attended Armenian-language church services; boys of Armenian descent—students for the most part—joined them for discussion groups; and social gatherings were held which specialized more in folk-dancing, songs, and fellowship than in scrutiny and analysis. The project had the assistance of the Boston International Institute, Miss Hagop K. Araxie, Armenian American social secretary, acting as liaison.

Spencer Tracy will be starred by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in "America," a film involving three generations of an industrial immigrant family which came to the United States about 1900. Louis Adamic has worked on the photoplay with King Vidor, who will produce and direct it.

The June 1942 issue of The Pamphleteer Monthly (313 West 35th Street, New York City, 35 cents) carries, in addition to its regular listing of pamphlets on all subjects, a special supplementary bibliography of free and inexpensive materials on Post-War Planning.

• The Bookshelf •

CONDUCTED BY HENRY C. TRACY

FAITH IN THE COMMON MAN

FORWARD THE NATION. By Donald Culross Peattie. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 281 pp. \$2.50

A book written with such ardor, yet with so clear an insight, calls for response in kind. Admittedly the historic facts of the Lewis and Clark expedition, "the boldest and most fruitful that history records," have here been poetized, but they have not been distorted with false glamour. The book's severest critic admits this is "a vivid, inspirational, and all too brief volume." To that we must add, it is one to read, talk about, then send to the boys in camp.

They will thrill as we do to the long trek through pathless wilds, to the high idealism that inspired both captains and men. Sheer grit and endurance brought them to the unknown source of the Missouri, through the Rockies, to the Pacific, winning by right of discovery a vast new territory for a young nation. The story of real men whose names appear in the journal of Meriwether Lewis, their captain, it races the blood and fires the soul. Not a novel, it is endowed by historic fact with a heroine who would grace any romance—Sacajawea, Shoshone Indian girl, captive of the Mandan tribe and guide to the party as they pushed toward the forbidden gate of the Rockies. Here she wins the honors she has always merited but never fully received.

Behind the story lies the vision of the great leader who remained at home in Washington, the village capital of the nation, who looked toward the West and

believed in it. It is written here that Jefferson, man of vision, "put his faith in the common man, the man with one axe, one rifle, one God, one woman, one vote."

This theme of the common man reappears in the many excellent regional studies now being published, such as *The Pennsylvania Germans*, edited by Ralph Wood, with eight outstanding authorities as contributors (Princeton University Press. \$3.00). These early colonists with their passion for peace were welcomed by the Quaker Penn into his vast wilderness domain; they were able—more able than any other stock—to convert it to the uses of healthy, godly, and democratic living. Practicing self-sustaining, diversified farming, these German, Swiss, and Dutch immigrants—"Pennsylvania Dutch" to many—settled on the land to remain there. Largely sectarian, they are alluded to here as the "plain people," to whom religion was not optional but central. "The plain folk do without some pleasures," it is said of the Amish, "in order that they may preserve for us a decent society when we come to our senses and are willing to stop fighting and starving and being bossed around." A fascinating book, well designed "to interpret the Pennsylvania Germans to their fellow-Americans and to themselves."

Pennsylvania Cavalcade, American Guide Series, compiled by the Pennsylvania Writers' Project (University of

Pennsylvania Press. \$3.00), starts with the settlement of Swedes and Finns on Tinicum Island (near Philadelphia-to-be) in 1643. The "Historic Places" treated in the first section of the volume are of unique interest, freshly handled, with fascinating detail. "Historic Highlights" give us ten Pennsylvania episodes of distress, insurrection, discovery (oil), or disaster (Johnstown). There is a section on "Experimental Settlements" and a comprehensive history of "Transportation." Interesting and readable.

Marion Nicholl Rawson in *New Hampshire Borns a Town* (Dutton. \$3.50) writes of plain people who between 1763 and 1863 brought into being a typical New England town out of pure wilderness and established its ways and institutions. An authority on early American life and art, Mrs. Rawson writes from intimate knowledge and keen understanding of the human persons she deals with—their plans, hardships, faith, work, neighboring, and efforts toward self-culture. She writes, too, with keen awareness of the natural background.

And now see the drift: a little book, *Ohio in Homespun and Calico*, by I. T. Frary (Richmond, Virginia: Garrett & Massie. \$2.00), begins—"This is a saga of common people. They lived commonplace lives, as did their neighbors. They performed deeds of valor, but few recognized that valor. . . . They made history, but rarely suspected it." This admirable, brief book by a great-grandson of pioneers is a tribute to their energy and solid virtues as well as an account of their homely lives, arts, crafts, and aspirations. Aptly bound, with thirty excellent illustrations.

Common men became uncommon in the region described in *Eric Thane's High Border Country* (Duell, Sloan & Pearce. \$3.00)—sixth, and one of the finest, in the American Folkways Series.

Backbone of the continent, this High Border includes all of Montana and parts of Idaho, Wyoming, and the Dakotas. Only the roughest, toughest of early frontiersmen were drawn to it, to live their lives in wild contrast to the home- and town-building family-men of sea-board and prairies. High plains, bad lands, and the Lewis overthrust, which in Glacier Park made superb scenery for the tourist, made also the stage and backdrop for some of the most lawless and picturesque drama in the world. With gold, copper, cattle, and sheep, with homesteaders coming like locusts, the tale makes an odyssey of almost fabulous adventure for the restless fortune-seekers of our world. The quieter, modern resolution of the picture is also here, with every breed of man, shaken into his proper niche, from the wretched sheepherder—Russian, Basque, Turk, or college-bred wastrel—to the sturdy Norwegian rancher shouting *Velkommen, Olav, Martha!* to the Crown Prince of Norway and Princess Martha in 1939.

In *The Long Ships Passing* (Macmillan. \$3.00), Walter Havighurst explores the windy country and waters of the Great Lakes, following the first push of the voyageurs up the vast inland seas in search of the Northwest Passage, the later determined immigration westward, and the final swing eastward of the products of man-tamed resources. Full of color, legend, and event, the book focuses freshly upon an all too little written of region of the country.

Archie Binns' *The Roaring Land* (McBride. \$3.00) is so essentially good, so full of the flavor and quality of life, that—like cream—among books of its class it must necessarily rise to the top. Built around youthful memories of Puget Sound, Seattle, and environs, supplemented by mature knowledge, and handled with the skill that has made his books

famous, the story of the Pacific Northwest in Mr. Binns' hands becomes more than a regional narrative: a phase, rather, of the enormously varied growth-processes of our still young but giant North American civilization. "All of America," he says, "is only part of the frontier of the world."

That it is one of the loveliest "fron-

tiers," the collection of photographs and etchings in *Fair Is Our Land*, edited by Samuel Chamberlain (Hastings House. \$5.00), proves without shadow of doubt. Here, American towns and villages, mountains and seacoasts, the great diversified face of the continent, tell in eloquent pictorial story the beauty common man found and helped to build here.

THE COMMON MAN AS WORLD CITIZEN

If, as Mr. Binns has said, this land is only part of the world's frontier, life in it should be a training for world citizenship. This view involves faith in men, not supermen. Dr. Carl J. Friedrich in *The New Belief in the Common Man* (Little, Brown. \$3.00) owns himself a convert to this belief. We have always had among us those who hold to the contrary doctrine of a superior few—an elite—the only type believed fit to rule. This view, by no means peculiar to the Nazis and their satellites, has found adherents in all lands. Its champion, Pareto—whose theories are here neatly punctured—was in high favor among American intellectuals as late as the '20s. Dr. Friedrich covers the history of modern thinking on this moot point in clear and convincing fashion. He finds no hope for the world except in a true democracy of rule, with all governments responsible to citizens and all citizens with a world orientation for their strivings. This he calls "mankind's common ground."

Ferner Nuhn's *The Wind Blew From the East* (Harper. \$3.00) might almost be taken as a gloss on Dr. Friedrich's thesis, for he writes of three famous men who were cursed by a sense of superior birth, background, and destiny—Henry

James, Henry Adams, and T. S. Eliot. Frustrated or embittered, they were escapists, all of them, from the lot of the common man of America, whose virtues they despised and whose healthy hold on life they could not share. Mr. Nuhn's book impresses us with its sanity, humor, and shrewd insight. Of Swiss and Pennsylvania Dutch ancestry, Mr. Nuhn identifies himself with the common stock and derides the "aristocratic dream of doing nothing—grace without work—" which, he says, is a notion brought by the East Wind to our shores. He finds here a new common character being developed "by a new kind of interrelations."

Count Carlo Sforza, writing of *The Real Italians* (Columbia University Press. \$2.00), stresses the long-standing good sense and generosity of the common folk of Italy. This vindication of the common man, whose spirit is alien to a regime now foisted upon him, is heartening, coming as it does from a diplomat who knows his people as they are today and in a setting of history. Only those movements have survived, he proves, that had in them some moral truth and aspired toward an ideal. He finds in the leaders of such movements a universal spirit, and in the plain people vital, healthy forces on which a free Italy may build. He

counts the real Italians ripe for world citizenship.

In *American Unity and Asia* (John Day. \$1.25) Pearl Buck thrusts directly at the crux of the problem of the common man who yearns to take his place as world citizen. "The issue today," she points out, "is not one of race, colored or white. It is freedom." And the front is here at home in the United States as well as abroad; it is "wherever freedom-loving men and women find themselves opposed to those who are fighting for themselves, their own race, their own aggrandizement, their own power, at the expense of other human beings." If the white man would honestly and courageously lift the battle cry of "freedom for all," Pearl Buck believes, he would go far toward bringing about the union of liberty-loving peoples so necessary to winning the war.

Search in the *Memoirs of the Life of Philip Mazzei* (Columbia University Press. \$4.00), translated for us by Howard Marraro, for a like faith held at a time when no man in Italy could be free. Drawn to the American colonies, friend of Franklin and Jefferson, Mazzei helped their cause largely. Words of his are to be found in our Declaration of Independence. Citizen of free America, of humble origin, he was the friend and adviser of statesmen, princes, kings. Prophetic of today are his words: "Men of great honor have but one path to follow. . . rascals have all paths open to them and invariably choose that most likely to satisfy their execrable desires."

Simon Segal's *The New Order in Poland* (Knopf. \$3.00), while written primarily to expose the ruthless exploitation by Nazi rulers whose dealings with the Polish land and people are a pattern of what may be looked for in all lands they may conquer, reveals also an indestructible and growing faith in the des-

tiny of these people and a clear vision of their social future. The "Manifesto of Freedom" now spread among them by underground sources is an amazing document and statement of objectives, in which political and economic democracy is clearly indicated, freedom of science and religion is guaranteed, race doctrines and anti-Semitism are eliminated, all nationalities are to have civic and social equality, co-operatives and small-scale agriculture are to be protected, and abuses of capital corrected.

Odyssey of a Faith by Bernard Heller (Harper. \$2.50) describes the soul-journey of a people who, centuries before the Christian era, were enslaved and scattered, and who in succeeding centuries of humiliation have held to a faith and developed an ethic singularly close to that the thinking world now holds and is fighting for. This basic belief in right conduct and a just God began, Dr. Heller shows, long ago to be democratized, thus making the common man accountable for his deeds and proclaiming a universal brotherhood. This book should appeal to all who would promote a durable peace based on intercultural understanding and mutual respect among people of divergent faiths and origins.

Leo Lania, writing *Today We Are Brothers* (Houghton Mifflin. \$3.50), tells his own life story, but also that of his generation. Of Russian and Polish lineage, of Jewish background, schooled in Vienna, journalist and writer in Rome, Berlin, Paris, he portrays the disintegration of a Europe that had lost faith in the common man and was being conducted in the paths of moral collapse by a set of men whose "superior" gifts consisted of incredible stupidity and blindness. Mr. Lania writes: "Democracy will be victorious only if she can destroy the Nazis with a more deadly weapon than tanks and dive-bombers—with the dyna-

mite of an ethical ideal." His title derives from a letter sent from Vienna: "We are fighting for what is eternal in mankind. . . we are more than members of a church or a party. Today we are brothers. And by our brotherhood we shall conquer."

In Canada, by Alfred Leroy Burt(University of Minnesota Press. \$3.00), the struggle for a government responsible to

the people—described here as the British North American Revolution—parallels that of the States, but without the bloodshed, thanks to the enlightened report of Lord Dunham (1839), which led to basic changes from which has grown the British Commonwealth of Nations. Expansion, industry, internal and external adjustments are covered in this compact and very readable history.

THIS AMERICA

Three excellent new compilations are designed to give the college student a better grasp of the aims and values of American life. All include modern articles, essays, fiction, and real life stories. *This America*, edited by John Kern and Irwin Griggs of Temple University (Macmillan. \$2.50), covers national issues, science, literature, press, radio, education, and vivid sketches of people and places, by front-rank writers; stories, but no poetry or drama. *Approach to America*, compiled by Professors Havighurst, Almy, and Bachelor of Miami University (Odyssey Press. \$2.00), is made "in terms of the student's own experience. . . activities such as he has had a part in. . . American people—where they live, how they think and feel." All selections are from modern writers. Stimulating, comprehensive. *Of the People*, edited by Professors Harry Warfel of Maryland University and Elizabeth Manwaring of Wellesley College (Oxford University Press. \$2.30), has similar scope but spreads a wider net to take in some older writings and some poetry, grouping its selections by idea rather than idiom, and placing stress on democracy in action. The latter section contains articles by Mary Antin, Jo Sinclair, Fred Wieck, and Leon Surmelian, reprinted from *COMMON GROUND*.

Written for the general reader and exploring the origin and development of our culture, are several new books. Before her death in 1941 Constance Rourke was engaged in a projected three-volume analysis of American culture. Van Wyck Brooks has now brought together and edited the exploratory work she had completed, in a volume called *The Roots of American Culture* (Harcourt, Brace. \$3.00). Fragmentary as they are, the essays reveal Constance Rourke's fresh and warmly human approach to the early manifestations of a native culture independent of European transplantations—in music, theatricals, folklore, and art. *Horse Sense in American Humor* by Walter Blair (University of Chicago Press. \$2.75) traces the course of home-grown laughter from Benjamin Franklin to Ogden Nash, adapting itself always to the taste of the times and carrying always the flavor of mother-wit.

Hugh I'Anson Fausset, a British critic, in his *Walt Whitman* (Yale University Press. \$3.00) gives a blend of biography and criticism that has not been surpassed for balanced judgment and engaging interest. Here is the human Whitman, without false glamour or unfair disesteem. Carlos Bulosan, whose book of poetry, *Letter From America*, issued by a private

press (James Decker, Prairie City, Illinois), is our first of its kind from the Philippines, is a poet Whitman would have owned as kin.

Lifted from the quiet eddy where he has long lain, the Quaker poet is revealed in Whitman Bennett's *Whittier* (Chapel Hill. \$3.50) as an ardent and able protagonist for the Negro as man and brother. His militant pamphlet, "Justice and Expediency," if better heeded, might have prevented the tragic war between the States.

In *The Old South*, by Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker (Scribner. \$3.50), we find that too much stress has in the past been laid on the planter class. There were also shipwrights, ironworkers, silversmiths, pewterers, tanners, saddlers, cobblers, tailors, chandlers, potters, and many others—artisans by inheritance—who laid the foundations of the South today and whose impress is not confined to that region but, by dispersion of colonial stocks, has affected our civilization from

Atlantic to Pacific. Liston Pope, however, in *Millhands and Preachers* (Yale University Press. \$4.00) deplores the fact that the cultural and social advantages possessed by the Old South, have not been evenly spread in the New. Millhands have been segregated, control of nearly every aspect of life has passed into the hands of "uptown people." Designed mainly to show the part played by churches in an industrial community, this case history of Gastonia, North Carolina, will appeal to students in the field.

Americans All (National Educational Association. \$2.00) is the yearbook of the Department of Supervisors and Directors of the N.E.A. It describes intercultural education and is especially valuable in showing what is actually being done through school studies to overcome race prejudice and form right attitudes. Work done in East Harlem at the Franklin High School is a particularly brilliant instance of adapting biology to this use in a district where race tensions are acute.

FICTION IN BRIEF MENTION

James Street in *Tap Roots* (Dial Press. \$2.75) bases his novel on the historic fact of a group of southern slave-haters who seceded from Mississippi and formed a free state of their own. Vividly drawn, this story creates a new type of character.

In *There Is a Happy Land* (Holt. \$2.50), A. J. Bezzerides tells of a migrant—penniless, jobless, placeless—who, unlike Steinbeck's transients, presses no *Grapes of Wrath* but soaks a careless happiness out of air and sun, blarneys his way into a farmer's affections, and wins a stake of his own when least expected. Watch this author of Greek-Armenian extraction, with a great zest for

life and a deep belief in the basic goodness of human nature.

The Just and the Unjust by James Gould Cozzens (Harcourt, Brace. \$2.50), the story of a trial in county court for murder, is told with the precision and economy of line that always characterizes this author, who cuts through every surface to the nerve of the proceeding and, in the end, finds jury trial both a safeguard of freedom and a protection of the court.

Brother, the Laugh Is Bitter by Lawrence Lipton (Harper. \$2.50) exposes Hitlerism at work in the United States as anti-Semitism of the vilest sort.

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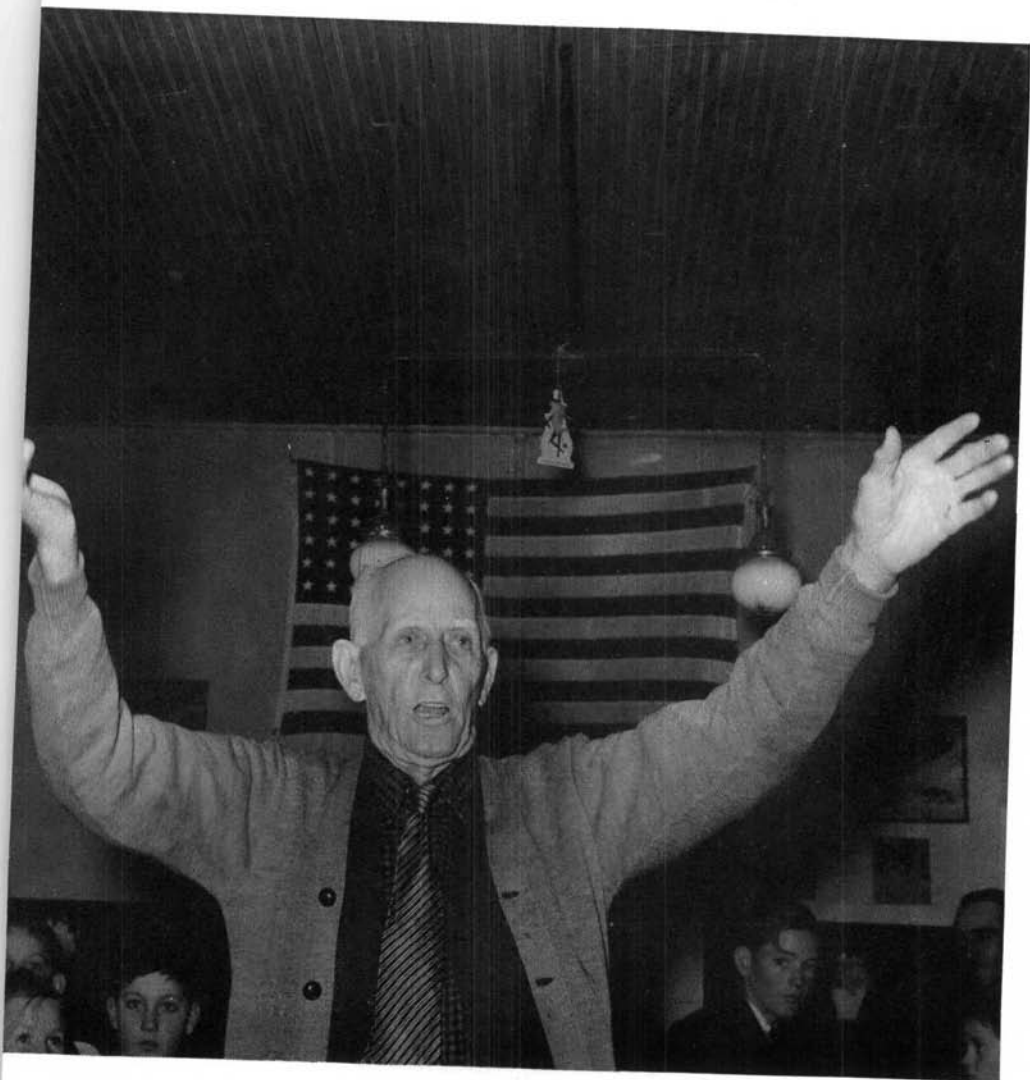
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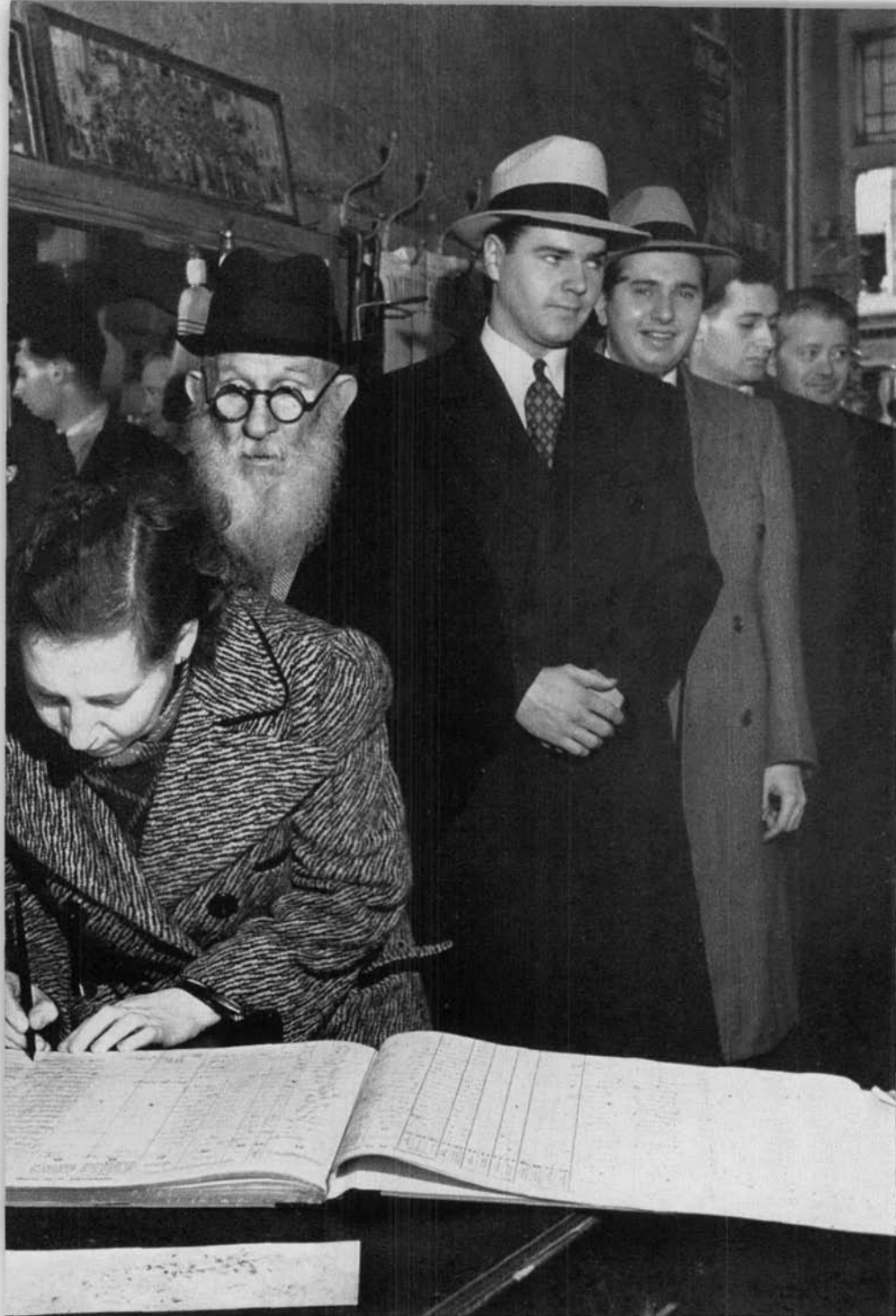
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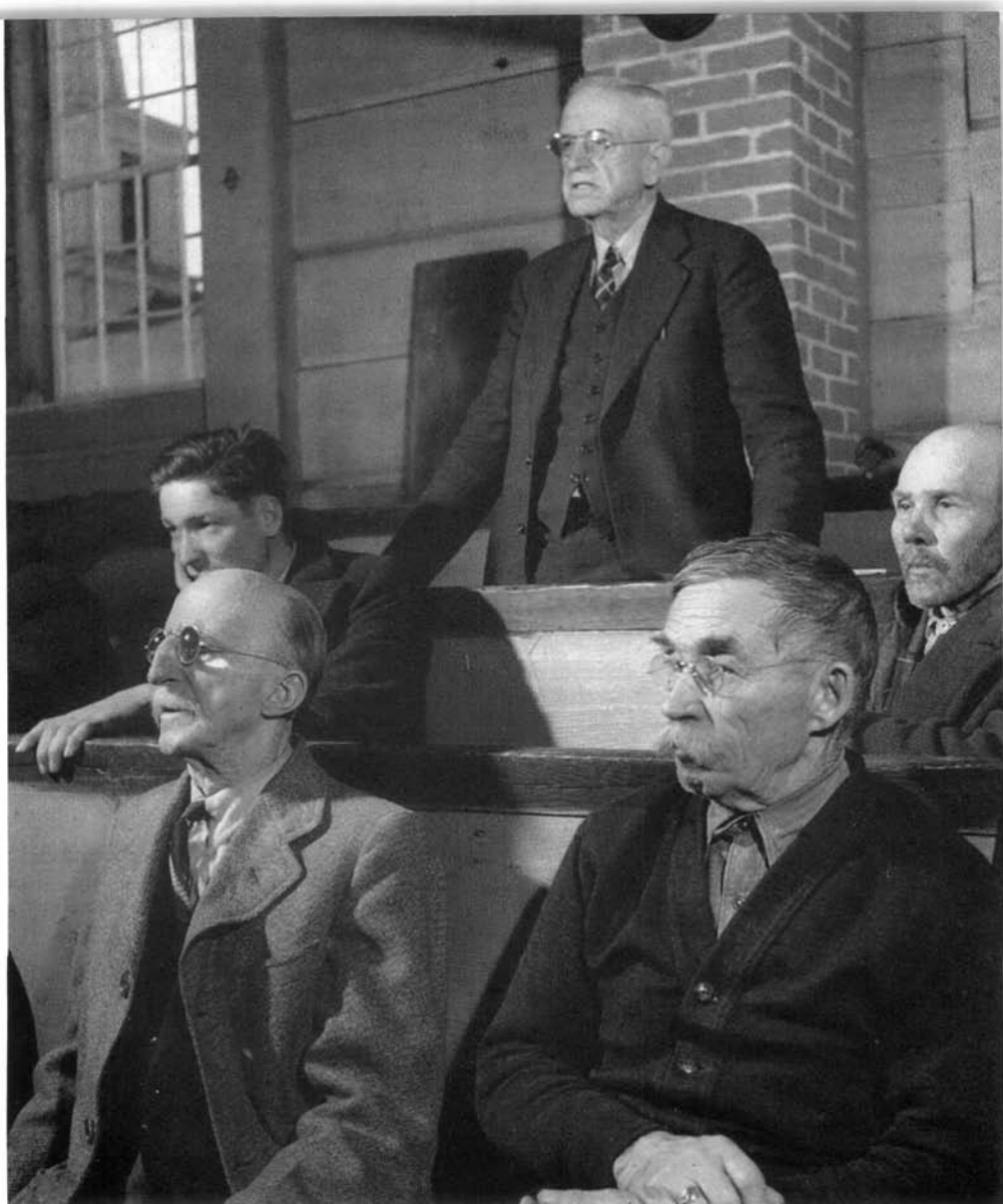
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